



Gender Equality Commission



Activities and measures at the national level contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023

Activités et mesures au niveau national contribuant à la réalisation des objectifs de la Stratégie 2018-2023 pour l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes

2022



Contents

MEMBER STATES/ETATS MEMBRES.....	4
Albania	4
Andorra/Andorre.....	12
Armenia.....	21
Austria	35
Azerbaijan	44
Belgium	48
Bosnia and Herzegovina	59
Bulgaria	68
Croatia.....	81
Cyprus.....	89
Denmark.....	100
Estonia.....	105
Finland.....	109
Germany.....	117
Greece	124
Hungary.....	131
Ireland	140
Italy.....	147
Latvia	174
Lithuania.....	179
Luxembourg	182
Malta	185
Republic of Moldova.....	192
Monaco	203
The Netherlands.....	212
North Macedonia.....	217
Norway	228
Poland	233
Romania	240
Serbia.....	250
Slovenia.....	259
Spain.....	266
Sweden.....	275
Switzerland/Suisse.....	282

Türkiye	285
Ukraine	292

Contributions appear in the language as submitted.
Les contributions apparaissent dans la langue laquelle elles ont été soumises.

MEMBER STATES/ETATS MEMBRES

Albania

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

By the Law No. 13, dated 3 February 2022 Albania Parliament ratified the No. 190 ILO Convention on Violence and harassment in the work world. On 6 May 2022, Albania deposited the instrument of ratification of the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) with the Director-General of the ILO. By submitting the instrument of ratification, Albania reaffirms its commitment towards the fight against the violence and harassment in the world of work. It becomes the 13th country in the world, and the 5th country in Europe, to ratify Convention No. 190 https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/subjects-covered-by-international-labour-standards/equality-of-opportunity-and-treatment/WCMS_844477/lang--en/index.htm

1.2 Policy changes

In the Local Action Plans for Gender Equality 2022-2024, prepared as instruments for the implementation of the European Charter for the Equality of Women and Men in Local Life, by the Municipalities of Elbasan and Tirana, approved by the Municipal Councils in June and July 2022, it is foreseen among others , preparing an internal policy against sexual harassment and hate speech sexism in the workplace.

1.3 Institutional changes

No development for the reporting period

1.4 Research and awareness raising

With Decision of the Council of Ministers No.400, dated 30.06.2021 is approved the “The National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021 – 2030” (NSGE) . The vision of the Strategy is : “A society which holds values gender equality and gender justice as a prerequisite fundamental conditions for sustainable, social, economic and political development of the country, empowers all individuals to enjoy equal rights and opportunities in all walks of life, does not allow anyone to lag live behind, and relies on the principle of zero tolerance against harmful practices, gender-based violence and domestic violence, by punishing perpetrators and protecting, rehabilitating and reintegrating abused persons”. The III Goal of this strategy is linked directly with GBV and DV: III. Reduction of all forms of harmful practices, gender-based violence and domestic violence.

In the NSGE 2021-2030, measures and actions aimed at eliminating gender stereotypes and harmful practices are foreseen, such as: actions that encourage equal sharing between women/girls/boys and men of work and unpaid care in the family; encouraging young women/young people to apply in fields of study traditionally considered “suitable for the other gender”; supporting more girls/young women/women in using technology and digital tools; encouraging young women/women for entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, including in fields related to the environmental economy; highlighting women/young women as positive images in political and public decision-making; educating and encouraging women in rural areas to demand the implementation of their right of ownership over agricultural land; challenging gender stereotypes through programmes on communication and positive parenting; informative activities on early marriages and other harmful practices, education on sexual and reproductive health, etc.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Albania is a state party of all Conventions mentioned above.

The changes and amendments of the legislation on domestic violence have done before reported period (Law 9669 “On domestic violence”, changed in 2020)

2.2 Policy changes

The National Strategy on Gender Equality 2021-2030 was approved in June 2021 with the Decision of Council of Ministers No. 400, dated 30 June 2021. It's important to add the information for this new strategy because National Strategy on Gender Equality and its Plan of Action (2021-2030). NSGE 2021-2030 reflects its direct relation to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the 2030 Agenda. The measures and actions envisaged in this strategy are combined or related to the measures and actions envisaged in the European Union's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 further laid down in the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP III) 2021-2025.

NSGE 2021-2030 comprises four strategic goals:

- ✓ Fulfilment of economic and social rights of women, young women, girls, and men, young men and boys in the society and the empowerment of women, young women, and girls in all their diversity, aiming at an improvement and sustainability of environmental (green) economy and their equal participation in the digitalisation process.
- ✓ Ensuring the equal participation, representation, and leadership rights of women and men, young women and men, girls and boys in all their diversity in political and public decision-making at the local level.
- ✓ Reduction of all forms of harmful practices, gender-based violence and domestic violence.
- ✓ Application of gender mainstreaming as the main tool of achieving gender equality and gender justice in society.

You can find the document of Strategy on the web of Ministry of Health and Social Protection: https://shendetesia.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/WEB_Strategjia-Kombetare-EN.pdf

2.3 Institutional changes

DCM No.327, dated 2 June 2021 “On the mechanism of co-ordination of work between responsible authorities, for the referral of cases of violence in family relation, as well as its proceedings, for the support and rehabilitation of victims of violence” to prevent domestic violence and violence against women, through identification and reporting, referral and management of cases of violence, support and rehabilitation of victims of all forms of this violence, as well as punishment of perpetrators and giving them the possibility of rehabilitation in relevant programmes.

National Referral Mechanism for Domestic Violence is established in 61 municipalities. During two last years are trained about 600 professionals, members of NRM, in collaboration with UNDP and UNWOMEN through Joint Programme with Albanian Government “End violence against women in Albania”, with support of Sweden Government.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Co-ordinated from the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, every year, has continued the development of the awareness campaign of 16 days of activism against violence against women under the UNITE global campaign from 25 November to 10 December. The 2021 campaign was developed under the slogan “Stop violence against women, now”. Over 300 awareness-raising activities took place only local government, civil society organisations, schools, police and other

institutions, supported from international partners, especially by UN organisations. The campaign had widely covered from media and social one.

Ministry of Education and Sports , also reports that within the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, in the educational institutions of 52 Local Education Offices , various activities and awareness seminars have been organised by the psychosocial service in schools in co-operation with the teachers. Various activities have also been carried out at high schools with a focus on gender equality and, among other things, students have performed in various fields such as painting, dance, theatre and literature - giving sensitizing messages against GBV. Leaflets were distributed and informative materials such as brochures or spots produced by various NGOs focused on issues of gender equality and actions against domestic violence were used. The creation of “Be a man” Clubs has started in several high schools in Tirana (in co-operation with the ACT for Society Centre).

2.5 Other pertinent developments

No information

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

Information provided is before November 2021

3.2 Policy changes

Information provided is before November 2021

3.3 Institutional changes

No information

3.4 Research and awareness raising

The School of Magistrates has organised for magistrates two training sessions dedicated to domestic violence and violence against women (in 2020 and 2022).

Prosecutor's co-ordinators have participated in seven different training sessions on domestic violence and violence against women, co-ordinated by the General Prosecutor's Office.

With the initiative of MHSP and in co-operation with the High Judicial Council, the School of Magistrates and UNDP, it is prepared and published the Commentary on the Law on measures against violence in family relationships,¹ as launched in a meeting on 23 June 2022.

3.5 Other pertinent developments.

Law 111/2017 “On legal aid guaranteed by the state”, gives importance to the provision of free legal aid to women. Persons with economic disabilities, as well as persons in the capacity of special categories, such as: victims/survivors of domestic violence, sexually abused, human trafficking or minors, benefit from legal aid, regardless of their income or assets. Legal aid is of primary form (information, legal advice, representation before administrative bodies) and secondary (representation with lawyers for free, exemption from all court fees and expenses).

For primary legal aid, the following have been established and are functioning: 10 Primary Legal Aid Service Centre (PLASC), 12 Law Clinics at Higher Education Institutions and 12 NGOs, authorised according to agreements with the Directorate of Free Legal Aid. During 2022, there will also be established 4 PLASC, to cover 100% with services of the entire territory in the country, with 14 centres.

¹ <https://shendetesia.gov.al/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Komentari-Ligji-Dhuna-ne-Familje-13-prill.pdf>

A total of 8153 people, including 3263 women benefited during the year 2021, and 1145 women benefited from primary legal assistance during January-April 2022.

During January-April 2022, 184 women received secondary legal assistance. In about 20% of the total requests, there is required only coverage of court fees, while in the rest of requests there is required a lawyer, together or not with coverage of court fees.

For the year 2021, Roma and Egyptian community have benefited from primary legal aid in 325 cases (253 handled by the PLASCs and 72 by NGOs).

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

The most recent changes to the Electoral Code in 2020 reiterate that the obligation to respect the principle of gender equality lies with electoral subjects, the electoral administration and the court. The Central Election Commission (CEC) has the right to intervene at any time either to demand that any GE violation is put an end to immediately, or, in case of omission, to have it established in its entirety.

The implementation of gender quotas (sanctioned in Gender Equality Law of 2008 and Electoral Code) resulted in a significant increase of the representation of women in political life and decision-making:

- In the X legislature (elections 2021-2025 of April 2021), women hold 50 mandates out of 140 in total, or 35.7% are women/girl MPs and 90 men/boys or 64.3%. Compared to the 2017-2021 legislature, we have an increase of 3.2% (11 more women/girls in 2021 compared to 2017); Women candidates during the elections were 732 women/girls out of 1871 in total or 39% ran for MPs in the 2021 elections.
- Speaker of the Assembly 1 woman; vice speakers of Parliament are 1 woman and 1 man; Permanent Parliament Commissions total 8, headed by 4 women and 4 men or 50% headed by women;
- The government is headed by the Prime Minister man, 1 deputy prime minister woman, and consists of 16 ministers of which 12 are women and 4 are men.

4.2 Policy changes

No measures.

4.3 Institutional changes

In 2021, in the framework of the election campaign of the central elections (dated 25.04.2021), The Central Election Commission and Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination prepared recommendations for preventing the use of hate speech during the election campaign, which deals, among other things, with equal representation in electoral lists, recommending from both signatory bodies that: "Political parties should consider implementing practices and policies to achieve in their electoral lists a representation that reflects the diversity of people in society, at all levels, even in cases where there is no express legal obligation to do so."

4.4 Research and awareness raising

In November 2021, the People's Advocate conducted a study on violence against women in politics and came up with concrete recommendations to reduce this form of violence against women, where, among other things, it is emphasised: creation of legal mechanisms by political parties to deal with political violence before, during and after elections; Central Election Commission should play a proactive role in preventing economic violence (e.g., unequal distribution of funds during election campaigns) and in monitoring political parties; to work for challenging gender stereotypes; to organise campaigns that promote the increase of women's participation in politics; Audio-visual Media Authority to take steps to ensure that women candidates are allowed fair television time to communicate their message and political agenda to voters, etc.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

No new development.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

In June 2021, the Albanian Parliament approved Law No. 79/2021 " For Foreigners". This law regulates the regime of entry, stay, employment and exit of foreigners to/from the Republic of Albania. The law defines the functions and powers of state authorities and other subjects, public and private, Albanian or foreign, that in accordance with the principle of the best interest of the child, the principle of the right to family life, the principle of non-refoulement, the principle of fair and transparent procedures and the principle of non-discrimination carry out activities in the Republic of Albania, which are related to foreigners who seek entering, staying and leaving the Republic of Albania.

In the Article 34/, paragraph 2/b) Refusal to issue, renew or cancel the residence permit is foreseen: '2. In exceptional circumstances, the residence permit may be issued or renewed even if the purpose of the stay no longer exists or has changed due to:

b) non-renewal or cancellation of the residence permit violates the right to family life and the best interest of the child

Can be found at:

"<https://www.parlament.al/Files/Akte/2021070817284820210705135531ligj%20nr.%2079%20dt.%2024.6.2021.pdf>

5.2 Policy changes

In the new Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030, in the formulation of strategic goals, specific objectives, actions, activities, and indicators where are taken into account the activity, action, indicator, objective or goal is intended to extend and cover individuals women, young women, girls, and men, young men and boys of all groups such as from rural areas, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, LGBTI+, the elderly, single mothers, survivors of violence/trafficking, girls who are mothers, migrants, and asylum seekers.

5.3 Institutional changes

Ministry of Health and Social Protection in co-operation and with the support of UN Women, UNFPA, UNHCR, State Police and Albanian Caritas, organised in July 2021 two training meetings with representatives of the border police, state police and members of the National Referral Mechanism in these municipalities (45 participants in both meetings) where it was discussed on the identification of cases of women and children seeking asylum victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence and their referral to the relevant services of the NRM in both municipalities.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

No information

5.5 Other pertinent developments

No information

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

The process of gender mainstreaming has started since 2008, when the Parliament of Albania adopted the Law “On Gender Equality in Society”. In implementation of this law, an important legal framework was adopted, and specifically for gender budgeting, in 2012, the Council of Ministers adopted a Decision “On Gender Integration in the Medium-Term Budget Programme (PBA)”, a decision aimed at integrating the principles of gender budgeting in budgeting processes, with the aim of easing or eliminating gender inequalities in various fields, which have been affected by public policies. To mention then the Organic Budget Law in 2016, the introduction for the first time of the concept of gender responsive budgeting in the budget system of the Republic of Albania and in 2017 in the Law “On Finances in Local Self-Government”, which created real opportunities for effective gender-responsive budgeting in all phases of the local financial management cycle (annual and mid-term budget programming, monitoring and reporting, assessment and audit) by local government units.

Gender Responsive Budgeting is one of the key reporting areas for both national and international commitments to Gender Equality of the Albanian Government. When reporting on the achievements in the implementation of Gender Equality and Gender Responsive Budgeting policies, in particular in the National Council of Gender Equality, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection has always emphasised the importance of linking the strategic planning process of gender budgeting with the process of budgeting as the only way towards an effective implementation of and international commitments of Government Gender Equality.

The National Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2030 includes Gender Responsive Budgeting as one of its pillars and provides a very good example of Integrated Planning. On the other hand, Gender Responsive Budgeting has also been used as a tool for the proper calculation of costs for the implementation of all objectives as well as the actual budgeting of costs in the specific budget programmes of the responsible institutions.

Budgetary funds dedicated to support gender policies are expected to strengthen the role of women in business, agriculture or professional education. At the same time, budget funds are foreseen for housing single-parent families, victims of domestic violence, divorcees, heads of households, etc. In addition, budget funds are expected to strengthen the role of women in the integration process, cultural life in the country and the development of science. The fight against domestic violence and the support of abused women is one of the main directions of the work of the institutions at the central and local level, which in a co-ordinated manner aim to support and guarantee the safety of the victims. Victim support with counselling, housing, legal assistance, psychosocial assistance, or the strengthening of referral structures and mechanisms at the local level are included in budget planning and are the object of monitoring, without mentioning here also the support of donors, mainly UN organisations in Albania .

6.2 Policy changes

No new development

6.3 Institutional changes

Pursuant to Law No. 9770, dated 24 July 2008 “On Gender Equality in Society” and Law No. 9669, dated 18 December 2006 “On Measures against Violence in Family Relations” as amended, the state authority responsible for gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence and domestic violence is the minister who deals with gender equality issues.

With the organisation of the government in September 2021, pursuant to subparagraph e) of DCM No. 609, dated 20 October 2021 the area of responsibility for issues of gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence and domestic violence was assigned to the Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoHSP). The Ministry exercises such function through the leading role of the Minister in the National Council for Gender Equality and the Sector of Policies on Gender Equality under Directory for Social Inclusion and Gender Equality, as part of the General Directorate of Policies for Social Protection.

Pursuant to Law No. 9770, dated 24 July 2008 “On Gender Equality in society”, Articles 11 and 12, the National Council for Gender Equality (NCGE) is the highest advisory body on gender equality issues, ensuring gender mainstreaming in all fields, especially in political, social, economic and cultural matters. The Council is established by Order of the Prime Minister and is renewed once every four years. The NCGE is chaired by the Minister of MoHSP and comprises 9 representatives of line ministries in the rank of Deputy Minister and senior-level managers, as well as three civil society representatives, who are elected on the basis of an open competition, based on their experience and contribution to such matters. The latest meeting was held on 9 September 2022 and discuss about Annual Report of Evaluation of Strategy of Gender Equality 2021-2030, for year 2021; the situation of Domestic Violence for the period of time 2021-2022; and for the process of designs of New Plan of Action on Implementation of Resolutions of Security Council of UN “Women, Peace and Security”, 1325

State institutions at central and local levels have a legal obligation to co-operate with the relevant minister in charge of gender equality issues in order to exchange information and facilitate the fulfilment of his /her function. To this end, a gender equality officer (GEO) has been appointed in each ministry (11 ministry) to address gender equality issues, and one or more local gender equality officers are appointed in each municipality (61 gender focal points/co-ordinators for domestic violence). During reported period are organised training with co-ordinators for domestic violence in all municipalities for domestic violence, gender budgeting, etc.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Various training courses focusing on issues of gender equality, gender-based violence and domestic violence are continuously conducted by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs as well as other line institutions at the central level and municipalities at the local level.

The Albanian School of Public Administration (ASPA) also contributes to the implementation of issues of gender equality and against domestic violence, mainly with activities to strengthen the capacities of professionals in this regard. During the reporting period :

-ASPA has developed training in the modules Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination, Gender Responsive Budgeting in the Medium-Term Budget Programme (PBA) and General Gender Budgeting at the local level. Gender equality officers, local domestic violence co-ordinators, child protection workers, specialists in assisting persons with disabilities (PWD), directorates for social issues, employees of economic assistance, social care, finance/budget, social housing and other employees interested have participated in this training.

- During the period June - December 2021 ASPA has developed 11 webinars in the field of gender equality and trained 417 participants.
-An online certification course was developed at the local level and 2 webinars with participants from the central, local levels and independent institutions for the Gender Equality and Non-discrimination module, with the participation of 90 people.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

This realised through annual monitoring of National Strategy for Gender Equality . The annual report for implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2030, for the 2021 is approved in the Vth meeting of National Council for Gender Equality, September 2022. The recommendation of this monitoring report are obliged to follow from all institution mention.

Andorra/Andorre

1. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genre et le sexisme

1.1 changements législatifs

Le Gouvernement de l'Andorre, donnant de la continuité à son engagement avec l'égalité de genre, a adopté la loi 6/2022 du 31 mars pour l'application effective du droit à l'égalité de traitement et d'opportunités et à la non-discrimination entre femmes et hommes.

Ce projet de loi recueille la définition de genre et stéréotypes de genre. Il expose aussi que le système éducatif andorran doit inclure comme objectif l'élimination du langage non sexiste et les stéréotypes de genre. Aussi que les pouvoirs publics doivent veiller pour que les jeux, les jouets et les jeux vidéo ne répondent pas à des stéréotypes de genre ni contiennent pas des messages ou incitent à la discrimination par raison de sexe contre les femmes.

Il met l'accent aussi sur le fait que les médias doivent veiller pour la transmission d'une image égalitaire, plurale et pas stéréotypée de femmes et hommes et promouvoir la connaissance et la diffusion du principe d'égalité et non-discrimination entre femmes et hommes.

Cette loi contient aussi des articles concernant le domaine de travail, comme sont : la promotion et l'amélioration de l'occupation des femmes, la promotion d'initiatives professionnelles conduites par des femmes, une majeure diversification professionnelle des femmes dans le marché de travail, la promotion de la conciliation de la vie familiale et de travail, etc. De la même manière, elle s'expose pour l'occupation publique.

1.5 autres développements pertinents

En ce qui concerne à la conscientisation et la prévention dès le domaine de la publicité et les médias, se sont adoptées diverses actions qui vont de la formation spécifique à des professionnels du secteur à des conférences ouvertes à la société civile. Cependant, l'action principale qui est en train de finaliser est un *Manuel de bonnes pratiques* pour mener une communication respectueuse qui garantisse un traitement digne aux femmes et aux femmes victimes de violence de genre et qui informe des ressources préventives, d'assistance et de protection existantes. Ce document se trouve dans la phase finale d'élaboration et pour l'octobre on prétend mener une réunion avec l'association de médias et les médias du pays pour livrer le susmentionné document et mener une formation concernant son usage.

2. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre la violence contre les femmes et la violence domestique

2.1 changements législatifs

Le Gouvernement de l'Andorre, donnant de la continuité à son engagement avec l'égalité de genre, a adopté la loi 6/2022 du 31 mars pour l'application effective du droit à l'égalité de traitement et d'opportunités et à la non-discrimination entre femmes et hommes.

Article 50. Violence de genre envers les femmes

1. Les pouvoirs publics doivent garantir un traitement juridique et assistance, en incluant la protection pénale, étaient différencié de la violence de genre contre les femmes en ce qui concerne d'autres maltraitements ou violences dans le domaine domestique, et considérer et aborder toutes les actions de violence de genre contre les femmes. A cet effet, on comprend par violence de genre envers les femmes une violation des droits humains et un type de discrimination contre les femmes, et désigne

toutes les actions de violence basées sur le genre qui comportent ou sont susceptibles de comporter pour les femmes des dommages ou souffrances de nature physique, sexuel, psychologique ou économique, en incluant la menace de réaliser ces actions, et la coaction ou la privation arbitraire de liberté, dans la vie publique ou privée.

2. Les pouvoirs publics doivent garantir la protection intégrale, en incluant la protection pénale, des femmes devant des actions de violence sexuelle. A cet effet, on comprend par violence sexuelle n'importe quelle conduite de nature sexuelle qui se réalise sans le consentement exprès de la femme.

3. Devant les cas de dénonciations pénales par violence de genre ou violence sexuelle est nécessaire l'intervention de professionnels capacités pour appliquer la perspective de genre, qui accompagnent et soutiennent aux victimes et évitent la victimisation secondaire.

2.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

La Loi 13/2019 d'égalité de traitement et non-discrimination recueille la réalisation d'un plan pour éviter la victimisation secondaire. Ce document ne fut réalisé uniquement pour des cas de violence de genre mais aussi pour d'autres collectifs considérés comme vulnérables comme par exemple : personnes âgées, enfance, adolescence, jeunesse, personnes handicapées, personnes immigrantes et personnes LGTBIQ+. Dans des différents domaines auxquels puisse se donner cette victimisation secondaire.

Ce document est déjà fermé, a été présenté à la Commission Nationale de Prévention de la Violence de Genre et Domestique (CONPVGD) et au mois de septembre va se présenter à toute la société et va s'envoyer à tous les départements et ministères concernés pour qu'ils puissent le faire connaître à leurs travailleurs.

2.3 changements institutionnels

A été constitué un groupe avec un représentant de chaque département/ministère susceptible d'intervenir dans des cas de violence de genre et pendant le mois d'octobre 2022 vont recevoir une formation détaillée sur violence de genre avec l'intention de que, postérieurement, ils puissent réaliser cette formation aux professionnels de leur département, c'est ce qu'on appellerait « Formation de formateurs/es ». les professionnels sont du domaine judiciaire, policier, sanitaire, social, éducatif, etc.

2.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Le 25 novembre 2021 furent menés à terme une série d'actions autour du Jour international contre la violence de genre :

1.- Campagne « MaiPor25N » avec la coopération du BC MoraBanc Andorra :

- Se réalisa un équipement sportif en couleur rose et lilas pour rendre visibles les actions autour de l'égalité de genre et la prévention de la violence de genre.
- Cet équipement sportif s'utilisa pour la première fois au match de basket du MoraBanc le 13 novembre 2021 (Básquet MoraBanc Andorra et UCAM).
- L'idée était utiliser l'équipe nationale de basket lequel a devenu un symbole du pays et offrir à la population une campagne avec laquelle puisse s'identifier.

2.- #SIGNALFORHELP:

Diffusion moyennant un banner dans les différents réseaux sociaux et sites web du signal universel de secours #SignalforHelp dans des cas de violence de genre.



© Govern d'Andorra - 2021

Il s'agit d'un simple geste fait avec la main lequel a été rendu viral avec le message #SignalforHelp et qui permet révéler de façon agile et prudente diverses situations de violence de genre.

Campanya 25N 2021: Dia internacional contra la violència envers les dones

ACCIÓ 2:



Govern d'Andorra

© Govern d'Andorra - 2021

3.- Phrases dans les panneaux lumineux de route de tout le pays :

Pendant 4 jours c'était possible de voir dans les panneaux lumineux du pays ces phrases :

-25N contre la violence envers la femme.

-Andorre pays libre de violences.

Ces deux phrases étaient en catalan, espagnol, français et anglais

Campanya 25N 2021: Dia internacional contra la violència envers les dones

ACCIÓ 3:

Incorporació de dos frases als panells lumínics de circulació del país, principalment durant la pròpia jornada del 25N i el cap de setmana següent:

Panell 1			
25N CONTRA LA VIOLÈNCIA CAP A LA DONA	25N AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	25N CONTRE LA VIOLENCEFAITE AUX FEMMES	25N CONTRA LA VIOLÈNCIA DE GÈNERO
Panell 2			
ANDORRA PAÍS LLIURE DE VIOLÈNCIES	ANDORRA COUNTRY FREE OF VIOLENCE	L'ANDORRE PAYS LIBRE DE VIOLÈNCIES	ANDORRA PAIS LIBRE DE VIOLÈNCIAS

© Govern d'Andorra – 2021

4.- Masques et boucles blancs :

350 masques de couleur lilas avec la boucle blanche furent distribués au personnel de l'administration publique qui travaille face au public.

600 boucles blanches furent distribuées au personnel de l'administration publique et au parlement.

5.- 10 courts-métrages :

Ils ont été réalisés 10 courts-métrages de situations de violence et/ou inégalité lesquels peuvent se produire au long de différentes phases du cycle vitaux des femmes lesquelles ont fini par se normaliser. Le but est donner visibilité aux différentes violences sexuelles qui peuvent subir les filles et les femmes pour promouvoir une majeure conscientisation dans la population.

Ils ont été diffusés de façon digitale par le biais de différentes voies (Instagram, Facebook, etc.). le premier court a été diffusé le même 25 novembre et le reste chaque lundi et jeudi de chaque semaine jusqu'à publier le dernier au mois de décembre.

Au mois de janvier 2022 se réalisa une guide pédagogique pour les professeurs de toutes les écoles pour qu'ils puissent travailler ces vidéos.

Campanya 25N 2021: Dia internacional contra la violència envers les dones

ACCIÓ 5:

Curtmetratges per visibilitzar les diferents violències sexuals que poden patir les nenes i les dones al llarg de la seva vida.



© Govern d'Andorra – 2021

3. Objectif stratégique : garantir aux femmes l'égalité d'accès à la justice

3.1 changements législatifs

Le Gouvernement de l'Andorre, donnant de la continuité à son engagement avec l'égalité de genre, a adopté la loi 6/2022 du 31 mars pour l'application effective du droit à l'égalité de traitement et d'opportunités et à la non-discrimination entre femmes et hommes, expose ce qui suit :

Article 22. Accès à la justice et légitimation procédural

1. N'importe quelle personne peut accéder aux courts de justice pour solliciter la tutelle du droit à l'égalité de traitement et à la non-discrimination par raison de sexe.

2. La légitimation pour intervenir dans les procédures judiciaires civiles et administratives qui aillent pour objet la défense du droit à l'égalité de traitement et à la non-discrimination par raison de sexe lui correspond à la personne ou les personnes affectées.

3. Dans les termes établis par les lois procédurales, elles sont légitimées pour intervenir dans les procédures judiciaires civiles et administratives, en nom et intérêt des femmes, et avec la condition de compter avec leur autorisation, les associations féministes et/ou de défense et promotion des droits des femmes, les organisations syndicales, les associations professionnelles des personnes travailleuses indépendantes, les organisations de personnes consommateurs et usagères, et les associations et organisations constituées légalement qui aillent comme but primordial la défense et la promotion des droits humains, et développent leur activité sur le territoire andorran. Cette autorisation n'est pas nécessaire lorsque les personnes affectées sont une pluralité indéterminée ou difficile de déterminer, sans aucun préjudice de la légitimation procédurale des personnes qui puissent arriver à s'identifier comme affectées.

Article 44. Justice

1. Les pouvoirs publics doivent fonder l'intégration de la perspective de genre comme instrument d'interprétation et application des règles juridiques dans le domaine judiciaire. A cet effet, l'application de la perspective de genre implique commencer par constater l'existence d'une inégalité structurelle des femmes dans la société et comporte l'application du principe d'égalité de traitement et non-discrimination comme critère d'interprétation des règles et de décision judiciaire pour éliminer les obstacles qui entravent l'égalité effective des femmes.

2. Les pouvoirs publics doivent garantir que l'autorité judiciaire et le ministère fiscal dans tous les ordres juridictionnels reçoivent une formation complète initiale et continuée en matière d'égalité de traitement et non-discrimination entre femmes et hommes et, particulièrement, en matière de violence contre les femmes et de discrimination multiple et intersectorielle qui subissent les femmes en situations de vulnérabilité.

3. Les pouvoirs publics doivent recueillir et traiter les données ventilées par sexe en relation à l'accès à la justice, incluant la participation des femmes au système judiciaire.

4. Les pouvoirs publics doivent fonder que les organismes de professions juridiques et judiciaires organisent des conférences et autres événements publics pour conscientiser les personnes professionnelles du droit sur l'égalité de traitement et non-discrimination entre femmes et hommes et, particulièrement, en matière de violence de genre contre les femmes.

4. Objectif stratégique : assurer une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique

4.1 changements législatifs

Le Gouvernement de l'Andorre, donnant de la continuité à son engagement avec l'égalité de genre, a adopté la loi 6/2022 du 31 mars pour l'application effective du droit à l'égalité de traitement et d'opportunités et à la non-discrimination entre femmes et hommes, expose ce qui suit :

Article 46. Participation politique et sociale des femmes

1. Les pouvoirs publics doivent respecter le principe de présence équilibrée de femmes et hommes dans la répartition du pouvoir politique.
2. Les pouvoirs publics doivent promouvoir le tissu associatif féminin et avoir en considération les contributions qui font les associations féministes et les collectifs des femmes et fomenter la participation des associations féministes et les collectifs des femmes dans des domaines publics de débat.
3. Les écoles et les groupements professionnels et entrepreneurs, les organisations syndicales, culturelles et sociales et les partis politiques doivent établir les mécanismes qui garantissent la participation active des femmes, et aussi leur accès aux organes directifs, avec le but d'aboutir la représentation paritaire.

5. Objectif stratégique : protéger les droits des femmes et des filles migrantes, réfugiées et demandeuses d'asile

5.1 changements législatifs

Le Gouvernement de l'Andorre a publié le Décret 110/2022, du 28-03-2022, pour lequel s'établit la procédure d'accueil et le séjour des personnes déplacées à cause de la situation humanitaire à l'Ukraine. Le décret susmentionné fut modifié le 11 mai 2022 par le Décret 200/2022, du 11-05-2022, en fixant à 285 le numéro de personnes qui peuvent se bénéficier de l'autorisation de séjour ou de séjour et travail en Andorre. En outre, la dernière modification correspond au Décret 270/2022 de date 29/06/2022 (BOPA numéro 79 du 29-06-22), par le biais duquel on continue à établir en 285 le numéro de personnes qui peuvent se bénéficier de l'autorisation susmentionnée.

https://www.bopa.ad/bopa/034079/Pages/GD20220629_13_02_20.aspx

5.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Attention au Bureau du Service d'Attention aux Personnes Réfugiées (dorénavant SAPRE). Types d'attention en accueil :

- Attention Sociale – Accueil et procédure pour la couverture de besoins urgents
- Attention d'Education – Procédure pour l'assignation d'un centre scolaire
- Attention d'Immigration – Procédure pour octroyer le permis d'accueil

Une fois réalisée l'inscription au Service d'Immigration les personnes accueillies ont pu commencer les formalités pour d'autres types de traitements plus spécifiques et de caractère continué :

- . Social – Suivi et intervention pour attention aux besoins sociaux
- . Education – Inscription scolaire et formation linguistique pour adultes
- . Sanitaire – Couverture sanitaire et assistance médicale
- . Travail – Inscription au Service d'occupation

5.3 changements institutionnels

Pour optimiser les communications entre usagers et techniciens, ont été habilités un courrier électronique et un numéro de téléphone mobile avec l'application de WhassApp.

5.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Pour le 20 juin Jour Mondial des personnes réfugiées diverses actions ont été réalisées :

- Se réalisa une campagne virtuelle laquelle consista en une chanson avec soutien graphique créée par un auteur interprète du pays. Vidéoclip « Entre fronteras ». Le vidéoclip se réalisa avec des familles accueillies de l'Ukraine pour l'Andorre.
- Le 20 juin se mena un acte présentiel pour présenter le vidéoclip « Entre fronteras » et se réalisa une interview à des familles réfugiées qui voulaient raconter leurs expériences.

<https://www.aferssocials.ad/>



6. Objectif stratégique : intégrer les questions d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans toutes les politiques et mesures

6.1 changements législatifs

Le Gouvernement de l'Andorre, donnant de la continuité à son engagement avec l'égalité de genre, a adopté la loi 6/2022 du 31 mars pour l'application effective du droit à l'égalité de traitement et d'opportunités et à la non-discrimination entre femmes et hommes, expose ce qui suit :

Article 29. Transversalité du principe de l'égalité de traitement et d'opportunités entre femmes et hommes

Les administrations publiques, les organismes autonomes, les sociétés et les organismes publics vinculés ou qui en dépendent doivent incorporer de façon transversale le principe d'égalité de traitement et d'opportunités entre femmes et hommes en toutes ses actes et dans la définition, la budgétisation, l'implémentation et l'évaluation de toutes les politiques publiques.

Article 30. Rapports d'impact de genre

Les projets et propositions de dispositions normatives de caractère général, en incluant les budgets annuels des administrations, les communs, les organismes et les entités vinculées ou qui en dépendent, tout comme les plans et les programmes de spéciale pertinence économique, sociale et

culturelle qui se soumettent à l'approbation du Conseil Général, du Conseil de Ministres et des conseils communaux, doivent inclure un rapport sur son impact de genre qui rende visible l'impact différencié des mesures projetées sur les femmes et les hommes, et aille en compte spécialement les facteurs intersectoriels et les situations de spéciale vulnérabilité de déterminés collectifs de femmes.

Article 31. Présence équilibrée de femmes et hommes

1. Les pouvoirs publics, les organismes vinculés ou dépendants et les entités qui reçoivent des aides ou des subventions publiques doivent répondre au principe de composition équilibrée de femmes et hommes aux désignations des charges directifs et aux organes collégiaux et consultatifs des administrations, sauf par raisons objectives dument motivées.

2. Ce principe doit s'observer aussi dans les désignations qui correspondent faire aux administrations publiques dans les organes directifs des entreprises avec du capital social public.

3. Ce principe ne s'applique pas à la composition des organes constitués pour la promotion spécifique des droits et les intérêts des femmes, lesquels peuvent avoir une composition exclusivement féminine.

Article 32. Collecte de données, statistiques et études

1. Les administrations publiques, les organismes vinculés ou dépendants et les entités qui reçoivent des aides ou des subventions publiques doivent inclure systématiquement la variable de sexe dans tous leurs études, sondages, collecte de données et statistiques.

2. Particulièrement, les administrations publiques doivent mener la collecte et l'exploitation de données sur toutes les formes de violence à l'égard des femmes, différenciées des relatives à la violence domestique. Egalement, elles doivent mener la collecte et l'exploitation de données sur les discriminations multiples et sur les plans d'égalité des administrations publiques et les entreprises.

A cet effet, les administrations publiques avec des compétences en matière de justice et le Corps de Police doivent créer un système intégral, partagé et avec une structure et des critères homogènes de collecte de données sur toutes les formes de violence à l'égard des femmes, en les différenciant des données relatives à la violence domestique, lequel permette distinguer tous les types de violences et la nature, sévérité et durée des peines imposées, tout comme sur l'émission de mesures de protection, en incluant le nombre de mesures de protection sollicitées et celles octroyées, le nombre d'inaccomplissements de ces mesures et les sanctions imposées comme conséquence de ces inaccomplissements, avec des données ventilées en fonction du sexe, l'âge de la victime et celui de l'agresseur et leur vincule.

3. À initiative du ministère compétent en matière d'inégalité, de l'Institut Andorran des Femmes ou de l'Observatoire de l'Égalité, c'est possible de concevoir des statistiques qui comportent la cession des données de titulariat d'autres domaines de l'administration, lorsqu'elles soient nécessaires pour la définition de politiques publiques vinculées à l'égalité de genre.

7. Principaux défis ; leçons à retirer

Les points positifs que je soulignerai sont la formation et l'expérience des techniciens et techniciennes du domaine de politiques d'égalité du Gouvernement et les points négatifs sont la difficulté pour avancer dans nos sujets en relation aux résistances qui présentent quelques professionnels. Une façon de résoudre ce problème si s'est déjà essayé par le biais de la conscientisation et la formation et les professionnels ne changent pas la manière de procéder est en facilitant aux citoyennes des feuilles et des circuits de réclamations pour obtenir un registre des incidents et mauvaises pratiques et pouvoir travailler avec ces professionnels et reverser leur comportement.

Depuis 3 ans le domaine de politiques d'égalité du Gouvernement de l'Andorre ouvre une convocation pour donner des subventions aux entreprises et associations civiques qui élaborent et impulsent des projets d'égalité de genre et de prévention de la violence de genre.

Concrètement cette année s'y ont présentée 10 et ont été octroyée une totale de 40.000 €. Les projets sont : mener des conférences ciblées à la population sur égalité de genre, mener une conférence sur filles et femmes avec TEA, mener des sessions coaching avec des femmes victimes de violence de genre, mener un atelier sur égalité de genre aux centres éducatifs, etc. L'idée est que les associations et les entreprises puissent aussi impulser des actions en faveur de l'égalité de genre puisqu'uniquement le domaine de politiques d'égalité du Gouvernement avec 6 professionnels n'arrive pas à mener les actions surnommées.

Armenia

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

One of the changes in the new Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia (entered into force on 1 July 2022) is the definition of criminal responsibility for discrimination. In the former Criminal Code, violation of equality was described as a pecuniary crime. The previous regulations focused on violations, directly or indirectly, of the rights or freedoms of a person, depending on person's gender, race and other factors, which caused damage to the rights and legitimate interests of the person.

Meanwhile, the new Criminal Code considers as discrimination the manifestation of differential treatment that infringes the rights or freedoms of a person, or by which a person is given advantages without an objective basis or legitimate purpose, on the basis of sex, race, skin colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic characteristics, language, religion, world view, political or other views, belonging to a national minority, property status, birth, health status, disability, age or other circumstances of a personal or social nature. The crime is considered completed from the moment of the differentiated treatment.

Unlike the former Criminal Code, the new Criminal Code has added the circumstances that can be the basis for discrimination. For example, if previously the disability was mentioned, then - the health status was added in the new Criminal Code.

In addition, if previously it was about violating the rights or freedoms of a person, then in the new Criminal Code it is also about giving advantages to a person without an objective basis or legal purpose.

Article 226 of the former Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia established responsibility for inciting national, racial or religious enmity. With the new legal regulation, this crime has been formulated in a new way, it has become more enhanced and comprehensive. Paragraph 1 of Article 329 defines: Public speech aimed at inciting or promoting hatred, discrimination, intolerance or enmity against a person or a group of persons on the basis of racial, national, ethnic or social origin, religion, political or other views or other circumstances of a personal or social nature, as well as distributing material or objects for this purpose (...).The new legal regulation, in addition to previously defined national, racial or religious characteristics, also defines ethnic or social origin, political or other views or other circumstances of a personal or social nature, which may cause enmity, hatred, discrimination, intolerance. On the objective side, the act can be done in the form of public speech or distribution of material or object for the specified purpose. This definition gives greater clarity and certainty to the crime under discussion and is more in line with the current challenges.

1.2 Policy changes

The Republic of Armenia government adopted the Resolution "On approving the 2019-2023 strategy and programme of measures for the implementation of gender policy in the Republic of Armenia".

The Resolution defines the priority directions of gender policy, the purpose of which is to create favourable conditions for the enjoyment of the rights and opportunities of women and men in all spheres of public life, taking into account the international obligations assumed by the Republic of Armenia.

Ministry of Labour and Social affairs (MLSA), as the agency leading the gender agenda in the country, advocates that the empowerment of women have a positive impact on economic and social development, enabling prosperity and social cohesion. In this context, various measures and

programmes aimed at creating an enabling environment for women to play a more active role in the economy continues to be implemented both with the funding of the state budget and in co-operation with international and national non-governmental organisations.

The government continues to take measures to promote equal economic independence for women and men and to remove barriers to women's labour market participation. Various state programmes have been developed in all spheres of public and political life, to ensure the involvement of women in the decision-making process. In particular, vocational training programmes are being implemented and much importance is being given to increasing the opportunities of accessing labour market by uncompetitive young mothers through professional training and mentoring programmes of employers, in addition to developing and implementing childcare support programmes and Women's Leadership in Small and Medium Enterprises. At the regional level, "Women's Resource Centres" are established in the regions (province) aiming at strengthening the capacity of rural women.

To promote equal economic independence for women and men and to remove barriers to women's labour market participation, the Accelerator National Platform for Women's Economic Empowerment was launched jointly with UNDP and the Ministry of Economy which aims at promoting women's entrepreneurship, increasing the demand of women in the labour market by strengthening their competitive advantages. The programme is designed to empower women so that they can actively participate in entrepreneurship and contribute to economic recovery efforts.

1.3 Institutional changes

The implementation of the gender policy is institutionalised at the national, provincial and community levels. As a co-ordinating mechanism, the Council on Women's Affairs of the Republic of Armenia is committed to ensure the equal participation of women and men in political and socio-economic processes. The Council supports the introduction of mechanisms for the inclusion of women's social and political resources in the democratisation process of the society, ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men. The Council is headed by the Deputy Prime Minister, and its objectives include: Fighting against violence, combating discrimination in all sectors of public life, promoting women's economic empowerment. The Council monitors the impact of state policies on gender equality, women's empowerment in various spheres of public life, opportunities for expansion, reduction of discrimination, and prevention of gender-based violence. The Council may establish temporary thematic groups to address individual issues or pressing issues in the area of equal rights and opportunities for women and men, with the recommendation and participation of non-board experts, the business community, and representatives of international and non-governmental organisations.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The Gender Policy Implementation Strategy of Armenia for 2019-2023 sets the government's priorities and way forward to mainstream gender across diverse sectors.

The strategy defines 5 priorities: 1) Improving the National Mechanism for the Advancement of Women, Ensuring Equal Participation of Women and Men in Governance, at the Decision-Making Level, 2) Overcoming gender discrimination in the socio-economic sphere, expanding women's economic opportunities, 3) Enhancing full and effective participation of women and men in education and science, 4) Enhancing equal opportunities for women and men in the field of healthcare, 5) Prevention of Gender Discrimination.

To expand employment opportunities for people with disabilities, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs implemented the project "Providing partial salary compensation to the employer in case of employment, financial assistance to the accompanying person with a disability", which involved 33 people, 16 of whom were women. At the same time, according to the legislation in the field of

employment, persons with disabilities have the right to be included in all state employment measures as a matter of priority.

1.5 Other pertinent developments.

Article 7 of the draft Republic of Armenia Law "On Ensuring Equality" (hereinafter referred to as the Draft law) stipulates, that anyone who has reason to believe that he has been discriminated against has the right to apply to the court, the Human Rights Defender or the appropriate administrative authority to restore his rights and to receive compensation for material and non-material damage.

According to Article 6 of the Republic of Armenia Law "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men", direct and indirect gender discrimination in all spheres of public life is prohibited. One of the forms of direct gender discrimination is different pay for the same or equivalent work, any change in pay (increase or decrease) or deterioration of working conditions based on gender.

The Law on Education of the Republic of Armenia states: "The Republic of Armenia guarantees the right to education regardless of nationality, race, gender, language, religion, political or other views, social origin, property status or other circumstances." Besides, according to the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education", the State guarantees citizens of the Republic of Armenia the right to free higher and postgraduate professional education in state higher educational institutions on a competitive basis. Therefore, based on the above, it can be stated that the Republic of Armenia excludes discrimination against women and girls protecting their right to education.

Actions aimed at the prevention of discrimination are carried out. The preventive measures are both of general nature (awareness raising, legal reforms, advocacy, etc.), as well as targeted and specific (enhanced employment opportunities for women, enhanced opportunities in education, reduction of cases of sex-selective abortions, etc.). Preventive interventions are implemented both by the state in co-operation with non-governmental and international organisations.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in co-operation with the Council of Europe conducted a three-day online media training on gender equality and gender-based violence among media representatives. Journalists, editors, publishing directors, social media, online and broadcast media, including regional representatives were selected as the target group. The following topics were discussed during the training: 1) Gender stereotypes and discrimination as factors promoting violence against women; 2) Media as a tool for social change; 2) Promoting gender equality and Supporting victims of domestic violence; 3) Coronavirus - violence against women, as well as the role of the media in raising public awareness.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Article 197 of the new Criminal Code stipulates responsibility for forced marriage, divorce or having a child. The disposition of the first part of the mentioned article has the following content: Forcing a person to marry or divorce or have a child by using violence, threat of violence, blackmail, humiliation, threat to destroy, damage or take property, or using the financial or other dependence of the person affected by the crime, or other means of coercion(...). The previous Criminal Code did not provide for a similar crime.

The new Criminal Code defines the responsibility for violent acts of a sexual nature. According to Article 198, paragraph 1: Intercourse or other acts of a sexual nature, including simulating sexual intercourse or satisfying sexual needs, which were committed against the will of the victim of the crime or by ignoring the latter's will, by using violence against the victim or another person or by

threatening to do so or by taking advantage of the helpless state of the victim shall be punished by imprisonment for a term of three to six years. Within this crime, the acts of rape, violent acts of a sexual nature, as well as the crimes of lewd acts using one's violent or helpless state, have been combined, because as a manifestation of the objective aspect, the simulation of sexual intercourse or the satisfaction of sexual needs, which are characteristic of the crime of lewd acts, is also provided, with the difference that in this case responsibility is defined for such actions without defining an age range, and in the case of minors and children, stricter responsibility is foreseen.

The new Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia also established responsibility for performing an artificial termination of pregnancy (abortion) or sterilisation of a person without the latter's prior and informed and properly formulated consent.

The strictest liability is established if the act negligently caused the death of the person affected by the crime or led to their or their close relative's suicide or their or caused another serious consequence.

By the same logic, liability has been established for forcing abortion or sterilisation. This crime is new in the Criminal Code and provides for forcing a woman to artificially terminate her pregnancy (abortion) or a person to undergo sterilisation by using violence, threat of doing so, blackmail or other means of coercion.

Article 188, paragraph 1 of the new Criminal Code defines: Human trafficking -recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of persons, as well as human exploitation or putting in or keeping under the situation of exploitation, by use of violence or threat of use thereof or other forms of coercion, through abduction, deception or abuse of trust, using one's influence deriving from the person's post or service position or authorities, or the personal dependence or vulnerability of situation of the victim of crime, or providing, promising or offering material or other profit with the aim of obtaining agreement of the victim of crime with the person supervising the victim, or accepting a similar proposal from the person supervising the victim to give such an agreement (...). Unlike the previous regulation that defined "(...) using violence not dangerous to life or health or threatening to do so or other forms of coercion (...)", the new Criminal Code defines "using violence, or threats to do so or other forms of coercion". According to the previous legal regulation, the performance of the act "using violence dangerous to life or health or threatening to use it" was intended as a descriptive quality of the crime, according to Article 132, paragraph 2, clause 4. With the new legal regulation, separate types of manifestation of violence or its threat were not distinguished, as part 1 of the article generally mentions any violence or the threat of its use, which is a more comprehensive and less vulnerable regulation in terms of qualification.

Domestic violence centres launched in all regions of the country which are co-funded by the state budget continued to provide support services to beneficiaries, such as social-psychological and legal support. With the co-funds provided by the state budget, there have been 2 shelters for victims of domestic violence.

The support centres provide services to beneficiaries, such as social-psychological and legal assistance (legal aid, hotline services) and protection measures stipulated in the law, make a decision to transfer victims of violence within the family and persons under their care to the shelter upon their consent and in cases and following the procedure specified in the law, assist the victims of violence within the family in finding job and receiving social assistance from the state or relevant organisations.

In order to support the victims of domestic violence, a lump-sum financial assistance is being provided to the victims of domestic violence (up to 150 thousand AMD annually from the state budget). Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is in charge of this process. The money is to be used for the following purpose:

To meet the minimum needs,
To compensate fully or partially for the costs of medical treatment and rehabilitation,
To compensate for the rent for living space to provide temporary housing,
To compensate for the costs of training courses for getting a job, except for courses stipulated in state employment regulation programmes prescribed in the Republic of Armenia Law on Employment for unemployed persons and those not competitive in labour market.

Within the framework of the five-year Action Plan of the Government (2021-2026) a number of measures have been developed, which will continuously expand the assistance provided to women belonging to vulnerable groups. The Government's five-year plan also envisages the expansion and introduction of sustainable co-operation mechanisms for the activities of the Women's Resource Centres operating in different regions with aim to strengthen the capacity of rural women.

2.2 Policy changes

The decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia on approving the "2023-2025 Action Plan for Combating Domestic Violence in the Republic of Armenia and Its Implementation Measures" was submitted to the Ministry of Justice on the basis of the received opinions. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs will finalise and submit the final version to the Government for the approval.

The Draft Law on making amendments to the Domestic Violence Law should be presented for inter-agency and public discussions.

One of the priorities of the Police of Armenia is ensuring the rights, safety and protection of persons subjected to violence in the family. In order to increase the effectiveness of the work of the Police carried out in the prevention of violence in the family, the Police established an electronic monitoring of the person who committed violence, which will enable to quickly respond on repeated violence and to take effective measures to prevent it.

On the initiative of the Police, within the framework of co-operation with international and local non-governmental organisations, training courses were conducted by the Police Educational Complex with the participation of experts from non-governmental organisations, as well as experienced Police Officers. The training was for the Police Officers dealing with minors and family violence prevention, and the curricula included the following topics: "Gender as a socio-cultural paradigm", "Violence in the family", "Criminal assessment of manifestations of violence in the family", "International experience - Model of poverty". The three-month training courses were held in 2 phases for 98 officers appointed to the positions of the middle group of the staff of the Police.

Another training for the Police Officers was co-organised with the "Women's Rights Centre" NGO, on the topic "Research of local and international documents related to the domestic violence", as well as a course entitled "Non-violence: cultural development among the Armenian population", attended by 33 Police Officers of the specialised divisions of the Yerevan Police Department and 3 regional Police departments.

Also, a training course within the framework of the existing co-operation between the Council of Europe and the Police was conducted on the ratification of Istanbul Convention. It was organised within the framework of the Police projects: "Police response to violence against women in Armenia" and "Strengthening the victim-centred approach" (the last was attended by 40 Police officers of specialised division).

2.3 Institutional changes

As mentioned in point 1.2 of this Questionnaire, the Council for Women's Affairs is established to support the mechanisms for the inclusion of women's social and political resources in the

democratisation process of society, ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men. The Council is mandated to monitor the impact of state policies on gender equality, women's empowerment in various spheres of public life. The Council may establish temporary thematic groups to address issues in the area of equal rights and opportunities for women and men, with the recommendation and participation of non-board experts, the business community, and representatives of international and non-governmental organisations.

In order to disseminate and develop knowledge and understanding of gender policy and to increase the level of awareness among the students of the Police Educational Complex of Armenia, a scientific workshop on the topic: "Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men" was conducted with the participation of 40 students. The workshop was held jointly with the representative of the Human Rights Defender's Office and with the participation of the Police Officer.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

With the support of international partners, a new round of training was provided in 2022 for the social workers of the Social Assistance Centres', for the frontline workers, such as Help Line Workers (114-911), social workers, and psychologists and the staff of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, with the aim to contribute to the development of their professional skills in the context of the fight against domestic violence and promotion of gender equality.

As already mentioned, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, with the support of the Council of Europe, conducted a three-day training for social workers of non-governmental organisations recognised as winners of a 2022 grant competition on domestic violence, key concepts of violence, identification of domestic violence, and the psychological state of victims.

The relevant services of the Police of Armenia are monitoring the "AM" and Armenian-language domains of the Internet, as well as popular websites, social networks and blogs in Armenia, in order to detect information with illegal content and to quickly respond. Classification of websites and constant analysis of the information included in them are carried out regularly.

The ongoing monitoring provides an opportunity to detect phenomena related to labour and sexual exploitation of people, illegal migration, illegal purchase and sale of human organs, as well as to identify users and organisations making dubious job offers, to take measures to find out the true nature of the offered jobs and possible criminal intentions of employers.

In order to increase the level of awareness and legal awareness of the population, especially the youth, regarding human trafficking and exploitation, as well as to prevent the crimes and other offences committed against them, and to carry out preventive activities among them, the officers of the territorial divisions of the Police regularly organise and held meetings and conversations on the dangers of exploitation, trafficking and ways to avoid them.

In order to prevent the cases of begging and vagrancy among minors, and to identify the persons who involve the minors in begging, the sub-divisions of the Yerevan Department of the Police and the regional departments of the Police regularly conduct inspection tours in the city of Yerevan and the regions (provinces). Within these inspection tours, the Police establishes co-operation network with local self-government bodies, other interested parties and public organisations.

In order to prevent crimes committed by minors, to refrain from violence, to prevent offences committed by them, as well as against them, to exclude the cases of involving them in criminal activities, to increase the level of their legal awareness The Police Officers, in particular, the Police units specialised in juvenile cases and family violence prevention units conduct preventive meetings and discussions on various legal topics. The meetings are being organised and held by competent officials in public schools and other educational institutions operating on the territory of Armenia.

Gender issues are also being addressed, as well as the protection of persons subjected to family violence.

In order to enhance public awareness on the prevention of family violence and violence against women, the Department of Public Relations and Information of the Police of Armenia broadcasted a series of thematic programmes and a number of press conferences. Besides, in order to strengthen the capacity in combating and preventing domestic violence, protecting victims of violence, as well as promoting gender equality, the PR Department of the Police participated in a number of meetings, online discussions, and media programmes.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

In the field of culture, starting from 2021, gender indicators are reflected in the general scope of indicators of the state budget of the Republic of Armenia.

As mentioned, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in partnership with the Council of Europe and the Police of Armenia conducted three consultative meetings with the responsible state agencies to discuss the multi-sectoral response to the cases of domestic violence. The meetings took place in Kotayk, Armavir and Lori regions of Armenia with the representatives from the Unified Social Services (USS), Child Protection Services, Child and Family Department, Health and Educational Departments at the concerned region's Governor's Office, as well as the Police and Domestic Violence Support Centre – an NGOs providing support to the victims of domestic violence. The goals of these meetings was to discuss the practices and challenges in dealing with domestic violence cases and to propose possible solutions for the improvement of the multi-sectoral response to domestic violence.

In order to properly carry out the centralised registration of domestic violence cases, the "Electronic Information System for Centralised Registration of Domestic Violence Cases" is currently under construction. The new system will enable to collect, register and to follow-up all the data related to domestic violence. Simultaneously, the procedure for registration of victims of domestic violence and its electronic system have been developed for the operational needs of the concerned agencies.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

The country's Constitution defines the promotion of equality between women and men as one of the main objectives of state policy in the economic, social and cultural spheres.

National legislation, including the Law "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men" adopted in 2013, endorses the idea of equality of rights for all in all spheres of public life and legal protection of all from gender discrimination.

On July 15, 2019, the Ministry of Justice developed a new draft Law "On ensuring legal equality". After a series of public discussions, the draft Law was modified and submitted to the Office of the Prime Minister. The draft Law "On ensuring legal equality" defines:

Direct and indirect discrimination, incitement to discrimination, harassment, segregation, victimisation, associated discrimination and temporary special measures.

The discussion of the draft is still ongoing.

3.2 Policy changes

The Office of Public Defender provides free legal aid, *inter alia*, to the following persons:

- family members record-registered in the family indigence assessment system and possessing points of family indigence higher than "0";

- insolvent natural persons submitting authentic data certifying the insolvency thereof.

Within the meaning of this paragraph, a natural person shall be considered as insolvent, where he or she does not have sufficient income, a jointly residing and employed family member, as well as does not have under the ownership thereof an immovable property other than the personal apartment or vehicle the cost whereof exceeds one-thousand-fold of the minimum salary;

- persons subjected to violence in the family, according to Article 11 of the Law of Armenia “On prevention of violence in the family, protection of persons having been subjected to violence in the family and restoration of solidarity in family”.

One of the strategic directions of the draft Decision of the Government “On approving the 2019 - 2023 Strategy for Judicial and Legal Reforms of Armenia and the Action Plan deriving therefrom” posted on e-draft.28am on 28 August 2019 is also the development of alternative mechanisms for provision of free legal aid with a view to ensuring access to justice, in particular through introduction of effective mechanisms for pro-bono legal services, which, in its turn, will contribute to the reduction of the workload of public defenders. In particular, it is necessary to create a new platform, which would involve advocates who are not public defenders, attendees of the School of Advocates, as well as lawyers of law firms, that will ensure the provision of free legal aid in various formats.

For the purpose of encouraging the submission of applications on cases of discrimination based on sex and gender, the Ministry of Justice has developed a package of the drafts Laws “On national minorities” and “On ensuring legal equality” and related laws, which has envisaged opportunities for applying to the Human Rights Defender through the newly-established Legal Equality Council within the composition of the latter with regard to the cases on manifestation of discrimination, as well as resorting to judicial protection for restoration of violated rights and freedoms through administrative and civil procedure.

For the purpose of ensuring referral mechanisms, point 73 of Decision of the Government No 483-N of 4 May 2017 “On approving the 2017-2019 Action Plan deriving from the National Strategy for Protection of Human Rights” provides for establishment of state-funded legal assistance centres in three marzes (provinces) and in the capital of Armenia.

3.3 Institutional changes

The Draft Law «On ensuring equality» envisages the establishment of the Legal Equality Council. The Chapter 3 of the Draft Law enshrines regulations on the status of the Equality Council and its members, the selection of the members, the termination of their jurisdiction/authority, objectives and functions of the Equality Council.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

For the purpose of raising public awareness, various measures, training of representatives of responsible bodies have been carried out multiple times and they are ongoing. For example, for the purpose of raising awareness about the protection of human rights of women and consistent improvement of professional knowledge and working skills of persons engaged in the administration of justice in the field of criminal law protection of those rights — judges, prosecutors and investigators, courses have been included in the 2016-2019 curricula of the Academy of Justice and have been taught.

For the purpose of raising awareness about the protection of human rights of women and consistent improvement of professional knowledge and working skills of persons engaged in the administration of justice in the field of criminal law protection of those rights — judges, prosecutors and investigators, the following events have been organised in collaboration with the Academy of Justice and foreign and international partners.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

Armenia has ratified key gender related International instruments, and as a member of the UN, Council of Europe, other regional organisations has undertaken measures to harmonise national legislation with the provisions of these instruments.

As mentioned in the Part 3, Armenia's Constitution defines the promotion of equality between women and men as one of the main objectives of state policy in the economic, social and cultural spheres, and the national legislation, including the Law "On Ensuring Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Women and Men" adopted in 2013, endorses the idea of equality of rights for all in all spheres of public life and legal protection of all from gender discrimination.

Legal regulations on ensuring the balanced participation of women and men in the elections are provided in the "Electoral Code of the Republic of Armenia" constitutional law. A 30% quota for women in the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia is ensured legislatively and is filled out in result of the parliamentary elections of June 2021.

4.2 Policy changes

In order to increase the involvement of women in the decision-making process at the state and local levels, a quota for women's representation in elective bodies was established within the framework of legislative reforms. As a result, the involvement of women in the legislature reached 23%, in the executive at 8%, at the level of ministers and deputy ministers 22.7% and at the Judicial level 28 %.

4.3 Institutional changes

Women artists are included in the professional committees formed in the various fields of culture.

As mentioned in the Part 1.2, various state programmes have been developed in all spheres of public and political life, to ensure the involvement of women in the decision-making process (e.g., vocational training programmes, childcare support programmes).

To ensure gender balanced representation, the Police of Armenia implement multiple and diverse personnel policy. For instance, the Patrol Service formed in 2021 allocates competitive positions for female staff. Currently, female Offices comprise 18.49% of the staff of the Patrol battalions of the Police.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

In co-operation with local and international NGOs, a number of training courses aimed at promoting gender equality have been organised. In particular, in 2021, a training on "Gender Equality" tools was implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the UNDP. The Ministry's staff also participated in a training on Gender Issues and Possible Solutions for Climate Change Mitigation.

In addition, in 2022, The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs within the framework of the events dedicated to the 16th day against gender-based violence together with the "Oxygen Foundation" and the "UN Population Fund" launched a campaign entitled "Prominent Armenian Women for Women's Empowerment" with the aim of raising women's awareness on the importance of gender equality.

At the same time, the Ministry, together with the "Oxygen Foundation", conducted training for regional journalists entitled "The Problem of Emphasizing the Role of Women in Public Perceptions in Armenia".

Besides, the staff of the Department of Public Relations and Information of the Police regularly participate in training and seminars organised by international and non-governmental organisations.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Provisions on granting refugee status are enshrined in the "Refugees and Asylum" Law of the Republic of Armenia.

5.2 Policy changes

A number of measures aimed at identifying human trafficking and related crimes are implemented by the Police of Armenia. It is ensured by the decision No. 909-L of June 4, 2020, and approved by the government for 2020-2022, within the framework of implementation of Armenia's National Action Plan on Combating trafficking and exploitation.

5.3 Institutional changes

The Law of the Republic of Armenia "On refugees and asylum" regulates the relations pertaining to grant of asylum and recognising as refugees in the Republic of Armenia, as well as ensures application of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol and recognises the right of all foreigners and stateless persons to seek asylum in the territory of the Republic of Armenia and at crossing points of the state border of the Republic of Armenia, as well as to receive asylum.

Foreigners, including stateless persons, who entered the country illegally were not held criminally liable provided that they applied for asylum immediately on arrival, in accordance with article 329 (3) of the Armenian Criminal Code, which was in line with the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Since 2018, 10 asylum applications had been received from persons who had entered the country illegally and applied for asylum.

Despite its limited financial capacity, Armenia continues to be a refugee accepting country, providing asylum to people affected by war and internal unrest at various times. Armenia has accepted refugees from Iraq and Syria in different years.

In November 2019, the Government had approved a programme to provide refugees from Azerbaijan who had entered Armenia between 1988 and 1992 with certificates enabling them to purchase apartments. The Migration Service had received 300 applications and had granted 240 certificates. Once the programme had been completed in the capital, it would be implemented throughout the country. Funding of 1.4 billion drams for the programme for 2020–2024 had been approved. Increasing numbers of refugees from Azerbaijan were being granted Armenian nationality, affording them greater protection. A budget of 13 million drams had been allocated to assist those refugees with their applications for Armenian nationality.

As a result of the military aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan against Artsakh/ Nagorno Karabakh in 2020, more than 91.000 people were forced to flee their homes and find refuge in Armenia, 88% of whom were women and children.

A significant number of the arrivals from Nagorno Karabakh may not be able to return safely even now with the ceasefire in place, particularly residents of territories currently under control of Azerbaijan. Most of the displaced persons, particularly from Shushi and Hadrut region, became refugees twice, as in the 1990s they were displaced from different cities of Azerbaijan, as well as the settlements of Artsakh under the control of Azerbaijani forces and subjected to ethnic cleansing.

The priorities of the Government have expanded to include the creation of economic, social and psychosocial support mechanisms to provide for the mental and physical wellbeing of the affected population, particularly vulnerable groups such as children, women, elderly, and people with disabilities.

The priorities of the Government have been expanded to include the creation of psychosocial support mechanisms to provide for the mental and physical wellbeing of the affected population, particularly vulnerable groups, such as children, women, veterans of war and people with disabilities, as well as the implementation of comprehensive programmes aimed at meeting the needs of war veterans, including medical care, procurement of prostheses, and psychological support. Accordingly, the beneficiaries were provided with psychological, social support services and financial assistance (based on the specific needs). A Centre was established to provide housing and other essential services, to identify the needs of the displaced persons, to assess and to address those needs. Furthermore, a Hotline Centre was established in order to receive urgent calls and help the beneficiaries accordingly. In addition, dignity kits containing essential hygiene items for women and new-borns were distributed to displaced women and girls. It's important to note that a particular support was provided to pregnant women by ensuring the provision of safe access to healthcare services for mothers and new-borns.

5.4 Research and awareness raising.

As mentioned, the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection and the Action Plan for 2020-2022 deriving therefrom has been approved by Decision of the Government No 1978-L of 26 December 2019. In this context, the Ministry of Justice of Armenia, which has carried out the co-ordination of works of strategy development, drafts such documents as inclusively as possible, namely in September 2019, three sectoral discussions were organised, within the scope of which, *inter alia*, the priorities for the protection of rights of women were discussed, which were later included in the documents. Many non-governmental organisations engaged in the protection of the rights of women, lawyers, representatives of the Supreme Judicial Council, deputies of the National Assembly and others participated in those discussions. As a result, many important points relating to the rights of women have been included in the National Strategy for Human Rights Protection:

- Criminalise domestic violence and violence against women in line with international standards;
- Provide in legislation procedural safeguards relating to effective remedy for persons having suffered from domestic violence and violence against women, in line with international standards;
- Conduct training on domestic violence and violence against women in line with international standards, including for police officers, investigators, prosecutors, judges and medical workers, representatives of educational institutions, employees of support centres for persons subjected to domestic violence;
- Adopt an action plan to combat domestic violence;
- Promote engagement of women in the armed forces.

NGOs also carried out awareness-raising activities. In 2017-2018, in collaboration with “Women’s Rights Centre” NGO, a series of programmes on “Shant” TV channel was implemented, with repeated playbacks, which was aimed at rejecting tolerance for violence, stereotypes for justification.

The standard and syllabus of the subject “Social studies” of 8th-12th grades of schools of general education cover topical units relating to fundamental human rights, legal equality of women and men, elimination of violence, tolerance and civil society. Topical gender materials are also included in elementary grades, in the syllabus of the subject “Me and the Surrounding World”.

During the instruction of the mentioned subjects, learners are informed of topics on legal equality of women and men in all spheres of life.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

In 2020, the European Union, in co-operation with the Government, launched a new Programme "Local Empowerment of Actors for Development (LEAD)", in the development process of which the Migration Service of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures had also participated. The programme provided an opportunity for migrants, including returnees, as well as migrant workers and their family members to start small or medium-sized business in their communities.

The objective of the programme was to direct the economic and human potential of migrants to the social-economic development of the country, to create a favourable environment for investing in Armenia the financial resources accumulated in the migrant host country, to support migrant workers and returnees to realise their entrepreneurial/business ideas, thus ensuring the effective and successful return of Armenian migrants to their homeland. The programme enabled the migrants and their family members, using their financial resources accumulated in the host country and the equitable funding received from the donor organisation, to make an investment in Armenia to implement their own entrepreneurial and business plans.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Article 83 of the "Electoral Code" (Constitutional Law) adopted on May 25, 2016, stipulates that The number of representatives of each gender in the first part of the electoral list of the party, alliance of parties and each of the parties included in the alliance, starting from the first number, in any whole number of triplets (1-3, 1-6, 1-9 and so on until the end of the list) must not exceed 70%.

The gender-sensitive component was ensured for all programmes included in the state budget from 2020. As a result, the content of the state budget reflected the goals of gender equality and social justice, distributing resources, directing revenues in a way ensuring that the needs of all groups of the population are equally addressed.

The gender component was included in the primary and secondary education capacity during the review of the state standard of general education and curricula; it was also included in the requirements for the development of illustrative materials on relevant topics in the published textbooks.

6.2 Policy changes

One of the principles included in the developing of the Draft Law of the Republic of Armenia "On Approval of the State Programme for the Development of Education of the Republic of Armenia until 2030" is the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development for 2030, in particular, SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all) and 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.).

In the educational system of Armenia, since 2007, the "Healthy Lifestyle" course has been taught in public schools, the content of which includes topics such as gender equality, domestic violence, sexism and women's rights. From the 2017-2018 academic year, within the framework of co-operation with the UNESCO office in Moscow, in order to increase the quality of the course, the Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture introduced the course "Methodological basics of teaching a healthy lifestyle in public schools" and developed a training manual for that course.

The materials posted on the www.teenslive.am website of healthy lifestyle for Armenian teenagers and parents, created by the "Arabkir" Medical Complex Children and Adolescent Health Institute in co-operation with the Moscow Office of UNESCO, were guaranteed to be used as auxiliary teaching

material for the "Healthy Lifestyle" course by the order N 1294-A/2 of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Armenia dated 09.11.2017.

On the initiative of the United Nations Population Fund, an online version of the "Healthy Lifestyle" school course on reproductive health has been developed. The version has been duly tested.

The online version of the "Healthy Lifestyle" school course on reproductive health topics developed by the United Nations Population Fund (<http://unfpa.apps.am>) was tested in 100 randomly selected schools of Shirak, Armavir and Syunik marzes (regions) of Armenia.

According to the new state standard of general education, from 2020, the new programme and standard of "Healthy lifestyle" has been tested, which was developed for grades 5-11 and includes the above-mentioned topics with updated and in-depth content.

As mentioned in Part 1.2, the Council for Women's Affairs is established as a national mechanism that supports the introduction of mechanisms for the inclusion of women's social and political resources in the democratisation process of society, ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for women and men. The purpose of the Council is to support the implementation of "strategic" tactical programmes for the development of women's issues in the Republic of Armenia, issues related to gender equality, gender discrimination and violence. Representatives from stakeholder state bodies, non-governmental and international organisations can participate in the activities of the Council.

6.3 Institutional changes

As mentioned in Part 1.2, the Interagency Working Group operates with the purpose of organizing the ongoing activities of the Council for Women's Affairs.

The Council may set up temporary thematic groups to address individual or pressing issues related to equal opportunities for women and men at the suggestion and participation of non-board professionals, the business community, and representatives of international NGOs.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Female pedagogues are included in the lectures and courses in the field of cultural education and sport.

Women are also included in the marketing, segmentation, targeting, positioning, knowledge and resource building courses organised for employees of state organisations operating in the field of culture, as well as management capacity development courses.

The staff of the Department of Public Relations and Information of the Police participate in training, seminars and courses organised by international and non-governmental organisations.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Within the framework of state financial support, women and girls are involved in the field of culture. Every year, the number of non-governmental organisations operating in the field of culture, which are headed by women, is increasing.

Austria

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes.

Please see last report.

1.3 Institutional changes

The **Austrian Fund for the Empowerment of Women and Girls “LEA-Let’s empower Austria”** was founded in 2022 to create another strong instrument for promoting gender equality in Austria.

One of the primary topic areas, which the fund will devote itself to, is the promotion of women and girls in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (**STEM**). The fund is committed to bringing about a change of thinking concerning stereotypical gender roles through STEM-projects as well as by co-ordinating existing STEM-initiatives. Increasing the number of women in the often-well-paid STEM professions can contribute to the economic independence of women and to the closure of the gender pay gap.

LEA will offer a wide **range of (empowerment) activities** and initiatives, such as role model campaigns, school workshops with female role models and webinars to promote the financial literacy of women and girls. Co-operation with important stakeholders, such as the Technical Museum in Vienna and Austrian universities, will bring added value to LEA’s activities.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

In September 2021, the so called “integration ambassador” initiative (German: **ZUSAMMEN:ÖSTERREICH**) celebrated its 10th anniversary and a new focus on self-determination for women and girls has been set (“Geh deinen Weg!”). In addition, the empowerment podcast “Du bestimmst.Punkt.” for girls and young women was launched by the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) together with a migrant’s magazine called “biber”. As part of the initiative, young migrant women from different communities report on their path to self-determination. See: <https://www.integrationsfonds.at/zielgruppen/frauen/> and below chapter 5.

In order to advance the continuous gender-differentiated data collection and data evaluation in Austria, the annually “**Gender Index**” is produced: It provides an overview of gender-disaggregated data in key areas such as education, income, and employment and sheds light on gender relations from various perspectives. On the one hand by highlighting differences and similarities in the life of women and men, on the other hand by making specific situations visible, such as single parents, retired women or women in management positions – overall: the different conditions women face compared to men.

Particular efforts are applied in specific policy areas like migrant integration. The **Austrian Integration Act** foresees continuous data collection of gender-differentiated information, which allows crucial insight in gender related differences and discrimination. The data is further evaluated by the ‘Expert Council on Integration’ and the ‘Advisory Committee on Integration’ and is used as a basis for policymaking.

The newly founded **Austrian Fund for the Empowerment of Women and Girls “LEA-Let’s empower Austria”** wants to reduce gender stereotypes, for example by introducing and promoting role models from the most diverse areas of life and society (including STEM). The first role model initiative/campaign with videos has already started. Together with some of the role models, LEA will also offer awareness-raising work in educational institutions.

Since October 2021, Austria is funding 14 **projects that combat gender stereotypes in STEM fields**, to promote more women in STEM related jobs and to raise financial literacy of women and girls. All projects will conclude in December 2022. An additional call for projects has been published in 2022: funding in the total amount of € 2 million will be offered for projects to promote women and girls in STEM fields, to promote digital competencies of women and girls and to combat cyber violence against women and girls (see 2.5)

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Austria has a long-standing history of policy making in the area of domestic violence, marked by the **Violence Protection Act 1997**, which had its **25th anniversary** in spring 2022. It sent a clear signal that domestic violence is not considered to be a private matter by introducing the principle “the one who hits, leaves”. Within the last years, important legislative improvements have been made – please see former reports.

Since July 1, 2022, courts have the option of ordering a perpetrator of violence to participate in **violence prevention counselling**. The request requires that the court has issued an interim injunction in the proceedings on protection against violence at home (Section 382b Act of the Enforcement of Judgements) and general protection against violence (Section 382c Act of the Enforcement of Judgements) and that the defendant has not yet participated in violence prevention counselling under the **Security Police Act**. The defendant shall then contact a counselling centre within five days of the issuance of an interim injunction to arrange counselling and shall actively participate in counselling on violence prevention. The counselling must take place for the first time within 14 days at the latest from the date of contact. For this victim-protection-oriented offender work in individual or group therapy, counselling of up to 16 hours is provided.

A notable legislative change in connection with the specified requirements that took place in Austria relates to paragraph 13 WaffG (**Austrian weapons law**). A provisional weapons ban is now issued automatically when a police officer, due to a case of domestic violence, imposes an entry and approach order.

2.2 Policy changes

In autumn 2021, the Institute for Conflict Research (IKF) was commissioned to conduct a study entitled **Investigation of Female Homicides 2010 - 2020 - a quantitative and qualitative Analysis** in order to improve the data and knowledge base, to identify and analyse gender-specific differences and motives, and to gain insights into additional prevention and intervention options. The first results of this comprehensive study were presented at the violence protection summit at the Federal Criminal Police Office on 23 November 2021. The study is expected to be completed by the end of 2022. The study is to provide starting points for further measures in the field of law enforcement.

Especially in proceedings for domestic violence, the earliest possible and well-founded objectification of injuries is a key topic of evidence. Meaningful expert forensic medical reports can significantly increase the likelihood of a conviction. The shortage of forensic medical experts in Austria prevails, therefore the expansion of **outpatient clinics for victims of violence („Gewaltambulanzen“)** is currently negotiated. Talks are ongoing between the relevant ministries which target the survey of the status quo in the field of clinical forensic examinations of victims of violence and the promotion of the establishment of round-the-clock outpatient clinics for victims of violence on the basis of **Article 25 of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (“Istanbul Convention“)**.

Following a public tender in 2013, **Violence Protection Centres** were established in each federal province and commissioned for an unlimited period of time. The **“Violence Protection Package**

2021” led to an increase in funding up to 50% (see last report). In autumn 2021, the respective **contracts were adjusted by additional counselling services**, including:

- Co-operation with regards to security police case conferences and victim protection-oriented perpetrator work;
- Co-operation with the newly established Counselling Centres for Violence Prevention (for further information, please see last report);
- counselling services covering the augmented aspect of cyber violence and
- the pro-active aftercare (i.e., actively contacting victims after the counselling has been completed to ensure the sustainable impact of the support)

On 29 September 2021, the Federal Ministry of Justice organised an **exchange of experience** on the topic of **“violence in the social environment”** between representatives of the public prosecutor's offices, the courts, the Federal Criminal Police Office, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, victim protection institutions, the probation support organisation NEUSTART and the lawyers' organisation. This exchange at the federal level is to take place annually in the future and serves to improve communication and networking between the institutions involved as well as to jointly develop best practices at the federal level and to discuss upcoming challenges and problem-based on completed cases.

The policies that deal with domestic violence and violence in the public space are continuously adapted to respond to current developments in those areas of police activity. The **guideline for the implementation of Security Police Case Conferences**, which was developed with the involvement of representatives of NGOs, the security authorities, experts from some State Police Departments and the Criminal Intelligence Service of Austria is now utilised by Austrian law enforcement. Further, the documentation relating to Security Police Case Conferences has been further formalised.

The **e-learning tool**, which was developed for the Protection against Violence Act 2019 and contains a module on Security Police Case Conferences is continued to be used in the standardised training of law enforcement personnel. In addition, three new training videos that deal with domestic violence have been developed and made available to all police officers by the Criminal Intelligence Service of Austria.

2.3 Institutional changes

Continuation of the **inter-ministerial working group „Protection of Women against Violence“**, comprising relevant ministries, all federal states and specific NGOs with its main task being the exchange of expertise and support of implementation measures.

Continuation of the **National Co-ordination Body „Protection of Women against Violence“** with its main tasks being the national co-ordination of state reports under the Istanbul Convention and exchange with other national co-ordination bodies as well as analysis and dissemination of specific data.

Continuation of other relevant Working Groups esp. on **Trafficking in Human Beings, Prostitution and Forced Marriage**.

Continuation of an ad-hoc working group with the aim to assure **accommodation in women's shelters of high-risk victims** across Austria's provinces under the lead of the Directorate General for Women and Equality.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Another major point relating to research and awareness raising is the **final report on the evolution of the Protection against Violence Act 2019**. Once published, it shall give insights into the effectiveness of domestic violence policies in Austria and enable adjustments accordingly.

Continuation of awareness-raising campaigns of the wide public on domestic violence

A **media campaign** was conducted as part of the international campaign “16 Days Against Violence” in November 2021. The aim of the campaign was to put the service of “Violence Protection Centres” on the map. The campaign was implemented in print media as well as on info screens in public transport, bus stops and stations.

As a result of the Russian attack on Ukraine, the **brochure “Violence against Women – Support Organisations”** was updated, translated into Russian and Ukrainian and uploaded on the website of the Directorate General for Women and Equality. For more information please consult: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/agenda/gewalt-gegen-frauen.html>

Following the success of the last two years, the **3rd Summit on the Protection of Violence against Women** will be held in November 2022. The Summit shall serve as a platform for exchange and discussion with the overarching goal of bringing together all relevant stakeholders. The Summit in year 2021 focused on the importance of clinical forensic medicine for violence prevention and protection.

Research studies

Austria will be among the first countries in the EU to finish the **prevalence study “gender-based violence 2020/2021”** (“Gender based violence survey”) in autumn 2022. The Austrian report is currently being finalised.

A qualitative and quantitative **research study on all homicides against women of the past 10 years (2010-2020)** was commissioned to acquire knowledge of the circumstances under which murders were committed and accordingly to take targeted measures (see 2.2). First data was presented at the 2nd Violence Protection Summit in November 2021 (see information above). The final results are expected end of the year 2022. The study is being carried out in co-operation with the Austrian Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, the Women’s Section in the Federal Chancellery and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

A **study in the field of clinical forensic** is currently about to be commissioned. Proper forensic evidence of traces of violence is of particular importance for criminal proceedings. The report of the study is expected towards the end of 2022 and shall include an evaluation of the status quo as well as a concept to improve the situation and to expand the supply of clinical forensic outpatient departments in Austria.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

The **budget of the Directorate General for Women and Equality was increased to 18.4 million EUR in 2022** (and reflects an increase by 81% from 2019 to 2022). A large part of the budget is allocated to measures combating violence against women and girls.

The Directorate General for Women and Equality launched a call for a project grant over 1.6 million EUR in 2021 for **projects regarding the “protection and prevention of women and girls against violence”**. The projects are currently being implemented (until December 31, 2022).

Another call for **projects on the topic of “measures to empower girls and women in the digital sphere and to diversify their educational path and career choices with a focus on mathematics, computer science, natural sciences and technology”** was launched in spring/summer 2022. The call aims to strengthen the protection against dangers on the internet, such as cyber grooming, cyber

stalking or other forms of cyber violence. The implementation period for selected projects stretches from November 2022 to December 2023.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.4 Research and awareness raising

To further promote awareness on the Equal Treatment Commission a short flyer was published in 2022.

3.5 Other pertinent developments.

The budget for **government-funded counselling services for women** has been increased significantly since 2019. Counselling services for women and girls has been strengthened, specialist-counselling services for those affected by sexual violence have been established in all Austrian provinces and a new counselling service to increase support for those affected by forced marriage has been set up in Western Austria.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Mentoring/work-shadowing programmes, confidence building, leadership and media training for women considering entering political and public decision-making is being offered to members of the Federal Civil Service staff.

As part of the Federal Civil Service's staff development program, a **cross-mentoring scheme** is available to promotion of women's careers. One distinctive feature of this particular cross-mentoring scheme is that managers from one Ministry (i.e., the mentors) support their female colleagues from other Ministries (i.e., the mentees). This is a specific programme to support women in their career with around 30% of the mentors being male. The mentors pass on their experience and knowhow, give advice on career planning and facilitate access to professional networks. Since 2005, about 1,400 mentors and mentees have participated in this program.

Women often attend **Media training programmes** in order to strengthen their self-confident rhetoric and appearance. Other trainings, such as "**Power Talking**", are designed especially for female attendants to empower them in their career steps.

The extent to which women are represented in **managerial positions** is a central issue when it comes to equal rights in the workplace. For one thing, management responsibility entails a wider scope of action and increased decision-making powers; for another, it correlates with levels of pay, making it one of the decisive factors in the income gap between women and men. The different pay grades within the qualification-based pay schemes therefore provide a good way of identifying staff with management responsibility, allowing for efficient, up-to-date gender audits. The percentage of women at all levels of management rose from 27.7% to 37.1% since 2006, a trend that continued across the board in 2021. In December 2021, the proportion of women at the Federal Civil Service's top level of management (i.e., directors general) was 35.9%. Out of 78 directorates general, 28 were headed by women, the highest proportion since 1995. In 1995 only two directors general out of 79 (i.e., 2.5%) were women.

As regards the government's target on **women's representation on boards of state-affiliated companies**, the latest progress report in 2022 indicated a further increase to 50.5% women among state-nominated board members in 2021 (see also previous report for details).

The 2021 **report on women's representation in politics in Austria** was published in 2022 by the Federal Chancellery, Directorate General for Women and Equality. The first report was published in 2018.

In March 2022, the **first national conference of female mayors** took place, under the auspices of the Federal Minister for Women. The event was organised by the Austrian Federation of Municipalities. In Autumn 2022, the pilot project **"Girls in Politics"** will take place for the first time, in co-operation of the Austrian Federation of Municipalities and the Directorate General for Women and Equality in the Federal Chancellery. On the "Girls in Politics" action day, mayoresses from all over Austria will be accompanied ("shadowed") by girls (6-18 years).

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Within the policy area of integration of migrants, the **Integration Act** of 2017, last amended in June 2022, stipulates integration offers and obligatory integration measures designed for particular circumstances of migrant women – for **displaced Ukrainian women** in particular. Through targeted policies, such as language and education offers in a protected environment, women are empowered and supported to lead a self-determined and independent life.

5.2 Policy changes

Federally funded specific institutions provide counselling on **Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)**. Women and girls affected or threatened by FGM/C have the possibility to receive medical, psychological, social and legal counselling throughout the newly established nationwide **FGM/C Koordinationsstelle** (engl. Co-ordination Unit) The federally funded FGM/C Koordinationsstelle aims to provide a need-based and demand-oriented care for women and girls affected by FGM/C as well as to contribute to prevention, training of relevant professional groups and awareness raising through targeted work with affected communities.

As mentioned in the previous report, a contact point in Western Austria (Innsbruck) was established in November 2021. Thereby offers of protection and counselling are provided in several locations across Austria.

A central focus of the Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF), a fund of the Republic of Austria and a partner of the Federal Government in promoting integration and advisory service for migrants, is the **promotion and support of women and girls with a migration background**. In courses and seminars, migrants receive information about their chances and possibilities in Austria in order to promote a self-determined and independent life. In addition, the ÖIF integration centres, which are set up in all nine federal states of Austria, offer advisory formats and information events for the promotion of labour market integration. As part of an ÖIF special call to empower women, the ÖIF is funding projects against violence and for the empowerment of women and girls in the context of integration: Those projects implement violence protection measures, especially culturally induced violence against women.

In addition, the Federal Chancellery supports projects across Austria with the focus on women and girls with migrant background **affected by violence in rural regions**, as well as on young people and children **affected by sexual violence** or on **preventive measures for gender-based violence**.

<https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/agenda/integration/projektfoerderung/foerderschwerpunkte/frauen.html>

For **Ukrainian displaced persons**, in particular women, projects from the special call "Ukraine" are implemented as part of the EU-AMIF funding period 2014-2020.

<https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/agenda/integration/projektfoerderung/asyl-migrations-und-integrationsfonds.html>

In September 2021, the **1st Austrian Integration Conference** on an international level took place, where a comprehensive package of measures was presented. The aim is to help women and girls with migration background to gain more strength to fight against patriarchal structures and honour cultures through:

- Expansion of counselling measures for women with migration background
- A school visit campaign by integration ambassadors on issues of equal rights and self-determination for girls and young women.
- Establishment of a contact point for girls and women affected or threatened by forced marriage.
- Establishment of a co-ordination centre on female genital mutilation (FGM) (see above)
- Prevention workshops aimed at boys and young men from honour cultures.

5.3 Institutional changes

The abovementioned (5.2) FGM/C Koordinationsstelle (Co-ordination Unit) is funded by the Federal Chancellery. The aim of the FGM/C-Koordinationsstelle is to improve the health of women and girls affected by FGM/C and to expand prevention by raising awareness among women and girls at risk and educating affected communities. <https://fgm-koordinationsstelle.at/>

A **Women's Centre** was established at the ÖIF Integration-Centre in Vienna in 2022. It bundles integration offers for women, for example:

- Personal counselling on all questions regarding integration
- Consultation hours on career and education with experts in the field: Clarifying opportunities for education and career and developing personal educational plans.
- Consultations on health and family: Talking to female specialists about family planning, pregnancy, sexuality, and mental health.
- Consultation hours on violence prevention and self-determination with female law enforcement officers and employees of violence protection institutions.
- Seminars with experts that provide information on topics such as work, education, health, violence, children and equality.
- German Learning groups for mothers and reading circles for parents and children.
- Excursions: Getting to know important institutions and contact points.

For more information please consult: <https://www.integrationsfonds.at/zielgruppen/frauen/>

5.4 Research and awareness raising

Information on Austria-wide assistance facilities in the event of violence **is available in 14 different languages** (including Arabic, Farsi, Somali, Chinese, among others) on the website of the Ministry for Women: www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/agenda/gewalt-gegen-frauen.html

For the area of integration work, please see the homepage of the ÖIF at: www.integrationsfonds.at

The federal chancellery itself provides a range of **different counselling programmes** and other services which can be found under: <https://www.bundeskanzleramt.gv.at/service/frauenservice-beratung-und-gewaltschutzeinrichtungen/onlineberatung-fuer-frauen-und-maedchen.html>

5.5 Other pertinent developments

The ÖIF provides various **teaching materials** for language entry and literacy on its website – an exercise software for literacy is also available - see: <https://sprachportal.integrationsfonds.at/deutsch-lernen/materialien-zum-kostenlosen-download/einstiegs-und-alphabetisierungsmaterialien>

In order to enable women with childcare responsibilities to attend language courses, the majority of courses offers **childcare**.

A significant amount of funds was added to the general budget on women to curb and prevent violence against women and several projects were added targeting similar goals.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Gender equality is an important aspect of performance management in Austria, which is a results-oriented strategy on the federal level of government. The **budgetary principle of promoting gender equality** was incorporated in the Austrian Constitution in 2009 and came into effect in 2013 by introducing the Federal Budget Act. Another important legal framework is the **regulatory impact assessments principles regulation** in which the federal chancellery (in accordance with the federal ministry of finance) defines the dimensions for the impact assessment (see below). Additionally, the Federal Ministries Act gives responsibility to the Federal Ministry for Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport for the cross-ministry co-ordination of actual gender equality.

The **system of performance management** has two distinct instruments: **performance budgeting** and **regulatory impact assessments**. Both instruments play a crucial role in achieving gender equality in Austria. The progress of gender equality is evaluated and reported annually.

The instrument of **performance budgeting ensures that all ministries and supreme organs define gender-related outcome objectives**, measures and indicators. The Federal Budget Act includes different subdivisions. Each sub-division can define up to five impact goals. One out of the five goals shall be gender related. In the budget of 2021, 32 divisions defined 35 gender-related impact goals. This significantly increases the transparency of government action in this field and guarantees the integration of gender perspectives in all areas of policy making.

The **instrument of regulatory impact assessments analyses the impact** of different measures taken by the government. The impact is analysed by means of different dimensions (eight in total). One of the dimensions is gender equality. Hence, the impact assessment includes a mandatory gender impact dimension for all regulatory impact assessments. All new laws, regulations and projects, in all fields, need to be analysed concerning their impact on equality. This entrenches the awareness for equality throughout the public administration and consequently raises the need to invest in skills to analyse these impacts.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Austria celebrated the **anniversary of gender mainstreaming in 2020**. Activities and events took place throughout Austria with the common goal of focussing more on gender equality and on the potential of gender mainstreaming.

The IMAG GMB website provides an overview of numerous projects and activities as well as best practices at international, national and regional level. <https://www.imag-gmb.at/>

The **“Equality in discussion”** series of events has been organised by the Division for Women and Equality since 2013 at the suggestion of IMAG GMB. It deals primarily with the topic of gender

equality in legal terms and with regard to the personal and professional development potential in a society. The last event was held online on 27 January 2021, on the topic of “Is artificial intelligence gender neutral?” <https://www.imag-gmb.at/service/projekt/veranstaltungsreihe-gleichstellung-im-gespraech.html>

The Federal Academy of Public Administration (Verwaltungsakademie des Bundes) offers **more than 15 different trainings on gender equality and diversity for Austria’s federal civil servants** every year.

Although there is training in the individual ministries, there is no legal obligation for specific training and/or awareness-raising activities. The Federal Academy of Public Administration (Verwaltungsakademie) offers specific courses to raise gender competence at the federal level.

Training courses may aim to foster and improve knowledge of the legal framework to facilitate the implementation of the relevant policies, they may train executives to support equal treatment of women and men as employees, or train female employees to better communicate their aims and preferences with a view to career progression. These courses are not obligatory, however.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

The **“Federal Income Report”** (based on §6 Federal Equal Treatment Act – Bundes-Gleichbehandlungsgesetz) **includes the gender pay gap for Austrian civil servants** of various sectors and hierarchical levels and is published annually in October.

The most recent “Federal Income Report” was published on 1 October 2021 (<https://www.oeffentlicherdienst.gv.at/publikationen/index.html>). The **gender pay gap** for Austrian civil servants **was reduced from 9.0% in 2019 to 8.6% in 2020**, which is significantly lower than in the Austrian private sector (19,9%). The next Report featuring the numbers for the year 2021 shall be published on 1 October 2022.

Azerbaijan

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

On 30 December 2021 Media Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan was adopted. In accordance with the Article 14 of the Law, racial, religious, origin, sexual, ethnic and other discrimination should not be propagated, as well as open calls for ethnic, racial or religious enmity should not be made. In addition, the law prohibits the hate speech.

1.5 Other pertinent developments.

1. **“Gender Azerbaijan”** e-portal was created for the people ensuring gender equality together with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs (SCFWCA) and German Agency for International Co-operation/
Electronic portal link: <https://genderazerbaijan.com/>
2. A 2-day training on "Gender equality and professionalism in the media" was organised for media representatives on 2-3 June 2022 jointly the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs and the Media Development Agency. 25 journalists participated in the training.
3. Starting from 23 May 2022 the SCFWCA announced the contest “The most active blogger promoting family values, women and children rights” among social network bloggers. The competition is scheduled to be finished in October.

A conference is planned to be held in December following the evaluation of activities of the bloggers.

4. The SCFWCA created a social reel entitled "Believe, they will manage" together with the Regional Development Public Union (RIIB) in accordance with the Paragraph 2.3.7 (Preparation of short video reels promoting the rights of girls and their value for parents and other relevant funds) of the 2020-2025 Action Plan on the Prevention of Sex-selection Abortions approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan
5. The Media Development Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan was established on 12 January 2021. The media representatives have several times been warned by Agency for sexist speeches.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.2 Policy changes

The 2020-2023 National Action Plan on the Prevention of Domestic Violence was approved under Decree #2307, dated November 27th, 2020, of the President of Republic of Azerbaijan. The activities were organised within the Action Plan in the period of 2021.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

1. On 29 November-3 December 2021 Council of Europe in co-operation with the State Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs organised workshops on gender stereotypes and violence against women in Azerbaijani regions. 130 people including representatives of civil society and the public representatives, journalists, students and teachers at the village school participated in the seminars.
2. In the framework of the EU-funded Twinning project “Strengthening the capacity of the State Bodies and local level referral mechanisms to provide safety and support to the victims of domestic violence”, a training course on “Domestic violence indicators, referral guidelines, and risk assessment” was conducted for the police officers and members of Monitoring Groups on 17-21 May 2021.
3. Three surveys were conducted regarding domestic violence issues. These are causes of domestic violence, victims' access to court, and court practice on the basis of appeals to the SCFWCA.
4. The SCFWCA conducted a survey to study the current situation on domestic violence. A total of 412 people participated in the study. 75.49% (311 people) of respondents participating in the survey were women, and 24.51% (101 people) were men.
5. An analysis on “Study of social and psychological aspects of human trafficking problems in the regions, preparation of proposals related to identification and elimination of causes” was prepared. The analysis was conducted by the “Legal Analysis and Research” Public Union with the support of the SCFWCA in 2021. The purpose was to study the causes of human trafficking in Azerbaijan. In total, a survey of more than 500 people and an in-depth interview of about 50 people were conducted.
6. From 25 November to 10 December, a number of activities were organised within the framework of the 16-day of Activism against Gender-Based Violence:
 - On 25 November the video appeals of Mrs Bahar Muradova, the Chairperson of the SCFWCA, and Mrs Vladanka Andreeva, the Resident Co-ordinator of the UN in Azerbaijan were shared on social networks.
 - From the first day of the campaign launched, the videos made with the participation of 6 bloggers were shared on social media and broadcasted by national AzTV channel.
 - 4 webinar sessions titled “Ask the Expert” live broadcasted on “Instagram” with the moderation of TV presenters and public opinion managers were organised.
 - “Neftchi” football club joined the campaign in an orange uniform symbolizing the fight against violence and shared the social video #Stop Violence on social networks.
7. The SCFWCA organised Summer Training Programme for students of the Faculty of Journalism of higher educational institutions (with the participation of 20 students) on 25-29 July 2022 in Ismayilli district of Azerbaijan. The purpose of the training is to educate students of the journalism faculty on the promotion of family values in the mass media, coverage of topics involving women and children, gender stereotypes in the media, combating domestic violence, and support the development of knowledge, skills, and personal development of future journalists.

8. On 9 September 2022, the employees of the SCFWCA held training on information safety for women and children living in the shelter of the "Clean World" Women's Aid Public Union.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

1. On 8 June 2022, and 20 June 2022 two social videos were prepared and released on the basis of the "Responsible fatherhood" project within the framework of the programme "Elimination of gender-based sex selection and related harmful practices in the South Caucasus" implemented by the UNFPA and the programme "EU 4 Gender Equality: Together against gender stereotypes and gender-based violence" programme, funded by the European Union, implemented jointly by UN Women and UNFPA.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.3 Institutional changes

Training was conducted to increase potential of monitoring groups on gender-based violence and violence against children which have been created within the system of local executive powers in each region of the country. In this way there has been an increase in the number of women advocate and judges.

3.4 Research and awareness raising.

A survey was conducted on "Access to court for persons who received injury from domestic violence: current situation and directions for its improvement" by the SCFWCA. Basic principles and standards regarding access to court for victims of domestic violence, improvement of national legislation, increasing of awareness raising and other issues were included to the survey.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising

1. Training on the rights and duties of municipalities, gender equality, and leadership was held for representatives of the Gender Commissions established in selected municipalities in the city of Lankaran (Lankaran-Astara economic region) on 10 December 2021 within the framework of the "Good Governance Programme for Local Development in the South Caucasus" by the SCFWCA in co-operation with the German Co-operation Organisation (GIZ).
2. On 20 July 2022 a roundtable on "Increasing the participation of women in local governance" was held within the framework of the joint organisation of the SCFWCA and the International German Co-operation Society (GIZ).
3. On 21 January and 11 March 2022 online communication and social media training was held for the employees of Women's Resource Centres. The training provided information on the management of social network pages, preparation and distribution of information and news posts.
4. On February-March 2022 online training on self-confidence and leadership skills was held for the employees of Women's Resource Centres.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

1. SCFWCA, through the support of GIZ and in co-operation with the State Examination Centre (SEC) and Baku State University (BSU), prepared and published the *Curriculum for Gender Equality in Civil Service* in August 2021.
2. "Methodical guide on the implementation of gender budget in Azerbaijan" was prepared and published together with the German International Co-operation Society. The manual contains information about gender budgeting in general, as well as gender sensitivity of state financial management systems, gender sensitive budget legislation, guidelines and gender audit, and analytical tools for gender sensitive budgeting.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.4 Research and awareness raising

On 7 June 2022, the SCFWCA conducted online training for the employees of the State Migration Service on "Gender and human rights".

6.5 Other pertinent developments

A "Gender-sensitive approach guide" was developed and published in co-operation with the German International Co-operation Society.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

"2022-2025 National Action Plan on Gender Equality" was drafted by the SCFWCA.

Belgium

1. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genres et le sexisme

1.1 changements législatifs

Des processus d'évaluation de la législation relative à lutte contre les discriminations fondées sur le sexe ont été menés afin d'en améliorer l'efficacité. En juin 2022, le rapport final de la Commission d'évaluation des loi fédérales anti-discrimination a été publié. Des travaux de modifications législatives visant à intégrer certaines recommandations sont en cours d'élaboration à tous les niveaux de pouvoir. Elles visent à renforcer l'effectivité des dispositifs législatifs permettant une amélioration du traitement des plaintes des victimes de discriminations fondées sur le sexe. Citons par exemple, la protection contre les représailles ou la prise en compte des discriminations multiples.

Des modifications importantes ont été apportées pour faire progresser la conciliation des vies privée et professionnelle : l'extension du congé de naissance (pour le père ou le co-parent) de 10 jours à 20 jours en 2023 mais aussi la transposition de la directive concernant l'équilibre entre vie professionnelle et vie privée des parents et des aidants qui est en cours de finalisation.

Enfin, Le droit pénal sexuel a fait l'objet d'une grande réforme par la loi du 21 mars 2022, entrée en vigueur le 1^{er} juin. Cette réforme permettra de mieux lutter contre les abus sexuels et l'exploitation sexuelle des personnes mineures et majeures en donnant au consentement une place centrale.

1.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Niveau fédéral

À la demande du gouvernement, l'Institut pour l'égalité des femmes et des hommes (IEFH) est chargé de la mise en œuvre du projet « Gender & Work » qui s'inscrit dans le cadre du [Plan national pour la reprise et la résilience](#) (PNRR). Ce projet a pour objectif de promouvoir l'égalité des genres sur le marché du travail et de contrecarrer les effets négatifs de la crise du Covid-19. Il se compose de deux parties qui interagissent et se renforcent mutuellement :

- Une recherche qui se compose d'une analyse approfondie des (in)égalités des genres sur le marché du travail et des conséquences de la crise du Covid-19 sur celles-ci, ainsi qu'une étude relative aux bonnes pratiques qui favorisent l'inclusion des femmes en situation de vulnérabilité sur le marché du travail.
- Un appel à projets intitulé « [Du pain et des Roses](#) », dédié à l'inclusion des femmes vulnérables sur le marché du travail. Cet appel à projet a été lancé au mois de septembre 2022. Les projets seront sélectionnés en janvier 2023 et mis en œuvre entre mars 2023 et août 2024.

Le projet « Genre et emploi » prévoit également une phase de valorisation au cours de laquelle les informations issues des analyses effectuées et des projets sélectionnés seront rassemblées pour élaborer des recommandations politiques ainsi que du matériel de formation et des outils. Une campagne de sensibilisation sera également menée pour attirer l'attention sur les besoins de ce groupe vulnérable. Le budget du projet est de 3.040.000€.

En mars 2022, le gouvernement fédéral a également lancé un appel à projets intitulé « [Tant qu'il le faudra !](#) » afin de stimuler l'émancipation sociale des femmes et/ou l'égalité de genre et de lutter contre la discrimination de genre. 127 propositions de projets ont été soumises par des associations dans le cadre de cet appel dont l'IEFH assure la gestion et le suivi pratique. 48 projets à réaliser entre le 1er juillet 2022 et le 30 juin 2023 ont été sélectionnés par un jury pour recevoir un financement compris entre 25.000 et 60.000 euros. Les projets sélectionnés concernent

différents thèmes comme les soins de santé LGBTQI+, la violence, l'emploi, la lutte contre les discriminations et les stéréotypes, ou encore le sans-abrisme, l'architecture, la décolonisation, les familles monoparentales ou la fracture numérique.

Communauté française

En juin 2022, désignation de référent.es égalité-diversité au sein de chaque administration de la Communauté française. Ces référent.es devront notamment mettre en place des actions spécifiques de promotion de l'égalité.

1.3 changements institutionnels

Flanders

Preparations for the establishment of the Flemish Institute for Human Rights, since - as stated in the Flemish Coalition Agreement - the Flemish Gender Ombud Service will be integrated in a new Flemish equality body.

1.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Niveau fédéral

En 2022, l'IEFH a lancé un marché public pour une évaluation juridique de la loi sexisme. Le marché est en cours d'attribution.

Flanders

- Project call "shared parenthood" for projects focusing on the active role of fathers and a better combination of work and private life for men and women was launched October 2021, and gave way to the financing of a dozen projects for a total of 600.000EUR. Preference was given to projects focusing on fathers of foreign origin or families in vulnerable situations <https://gelijkekansen.be/praktisch/subsidies/oproep-gedeeld-ouderschap>
- Prison 'Project M', initiated and funded by the Flemish Minister of Justice and Enforcement. The pilot project M (September 2020 – March 2022) aimed, through workshops for prisoners, at challenging gender stereotypes and masculinity, tackling (gender-based) violence and raise awareness and attitudes shifts on gender, sexuality and discrimination. In March 2022, as result of the pilot, an academic evaluation report conducted by the University of Ghent was published.

Communauté française

Mise en place de groupe de travail constitué des services de membres du comité de suivi du plan droits des femmes pour la réalisation d'une campagne de sensibilisation sur la lutte contre les stéréotypes de genre.

1.5 autres développements pertinents

Flanders

An Inter-Ministerial Conference on Women's Rights was established in December 2019, aiming to strengthen co-operation between the different levels of government in order to guarantee women's rights in all areas of life. The IMC chairmanship rotates every 10 months. Each chair chooses the theme or themes to work on during that period.

The Flemish minister for EO took over the presidency at the end of September 2022 and put forward as its priority: "gender and care", tackling themes as the under-representation of men in certain sectors, more specifically childcare, and shared and active parenthood.

Communauté française

a) Le langage et la communication

Le 14/7/2022 Adoption de l'arrêté Arrêté du Gouvernement de la Communauté française portant exécution du décret du 14 octobre 2021 relatif au renforcement de la féminisation des noms de métier, fonction, grade ou titre et aux bonnes pratiques non discriminatoires quant au genre dans le cadre des communications officielles ou formelles

https://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/mopdf/2022/08/19_1.pdf#Page244

b) l'internet et les réseaux sociaux et la violence sexiste en ligne

Financement par la Communauté française, dans le cadre de l'appel à projets EVRAS Jeunesse, de projets (animations, formations et outils) visant spécifiquement les réseaux sociaux : En tant qu'endroit où se manifestent l'affectif, le relationnel et le sexuel entre les jeunes et ses dérivés et/ou en tant que médium de communication en matière d'EVRAS. Cet appel a permis de financer 16 projets pour un montant de 100.000 EUR.

c) éducation

Pérennisation et actualisation en cours par la Communauté française du Module de formation initiale et continuée « Filles-garçons : une même école » qui vise à apporter des contenus, des pratiques, des stratégies et des outils aux (futur-e-s) enseignant-e-s sur les questions d'égalité filles-garçons à l'école afin de pouvoir dispenser un enseignement plus égalitaire et dépourvu de stéréotypes de genre et sexistes. (<http://egalitefillesgarcons.be/>)

d) culture

Processus de reconnaissance de 3 Collectifs d'associations œuvrant pour une meilleure représentativité des femmes dans le champ des politiques culturelles par le comité de suivi du Plan Droits des femmes de la Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles et faisant suite au décret du 7 janvier 2016 relatif à l'intégration de la dimension de genre dans l'ensemble des politiques de la Communauté française modifié le 14 juillet 2021. Ces collectifs sont reconnus pour mettre un œuvre un plan d'actions de 5 ans autour notamment de la thématique de lutte contre les discriminations, le sexisme et les stéréotypes de genre dans la Culture et les Médias.

2. Objectif stratégique : prévenir et combattre la violence contre les femmes et la violence domestique

2.1 changements législatifs

Niveau fédéral

Le droit pénal sexuel a fait l'objet d'une grande réforme par la loi du 21 mars 2022 modifiant le Code pénal en ce qui concerne le droit pénal sexuel. Pour mieux s'attaquer aux infractions sexuelles, le droit pénal sexuel est réformé à partir du 1er juin 2022 : la nécessité du consentement obtient une place centrale, les infractions sexuelles se voient attribuer de nouvelles définitions et les peines sont alourdies dans certains cas. L'exploitation du travail du sexe a été décriminalisée.

Flanders

The Flemish Minister of Wellbeing continued the initiated policy measures regarding the approach on domestic violence and provided extra financial support for the professional helpline for questions regarding violence, abuse and child maltreatment 1712 in order to increase its opening hours and capacity and reinforce its communication and disclosure strategies.

The Flemish Minister of Wellbeing contributes to the adaptation of het Flemish co-operation agreement on victim support and the approval of the Brussels co-operation agreement on victim support. These co-operation agreements set out guidelines on the co-operation between Police, Justice and victim support services regarding the support of victims.

2.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Complémentairement aux plans régionaux, les autorités belges se sont engagées à poursuivre une stratégie concertée de lutte contre toutes les formes de violences de genre et ont adopté le 26 novembre 2021 le plan d'action national de lutte contre les violences basées sur le genre (PAN) 2021-2025. Ce plan complète le cadre belge par de nouvelles mesures et s'appuie notamment sur les recommandations de la société civile et les conclusions du rapport du GREVIO sur la mise en œuvre de la Convention d'Istanbul par la Belgique. Sept axes stratégiques s'y déclinent en 201 mesures clés permettant de répondre spécifiquement aux différents domaines de la lutte contre les violences basées sur le genre, dont en particulier les violences à l'égard des femmes fondées sur le genre.

Flanders

- From January 2021 to January 2022, a scientific research project was conducted into low-threshold, directly accessible centers for tackling domestic violence. The aim is to develop, based on current good practices (see i.a. chain approach and Family Justice Centers), an intersectoral and multidisciplinary model on tackling domestic violence. For the development and support of these centers, the Flemish Government invests an annual budget of 9 million euros.
- In October 2020 the Flemish action plan on Sexual Violence was launched. In addition to an ongoing evaluation, an update of the plan is foreseen at the end of 2022. Meanwhile different measures have been taken:
 - o A study has been launched to implement a 'tool for detecting violence by professionals' in different sectors such as sports, education, culture and justice.
 - o Several campaigns were launched to raise awareness of (domestic) violence. Campaigns focused for example on the role of bystanders, but also to get to know helplines better.
 - o The chatline '1712' (chatline for questions about violence and child abuse) opening hours were extended.
 - o A law was passed requiring volunteers working with minors to present a criminal records certificate.
 - o Structured risk assessment tools are being introduced in the Flemish houses of justice to support the probation officer in their professional judgment.
 - o The research on 'the supervision and treatment of sex offenders in detention' was completed. It examines how treatment is best organised to limit recidivism as much as possible and facilitate rehabilitation.
 - o A study has been launched to look at the implementation of the project COSA. The main goal of COSA is to advance reintegration of sex offenders with the help of volunteers.
 - o Lawyers were trained on the multiple aspects of sexual violence and its impact on victims, at the initiative of the Flemish Minister for Justice and Enforcement in collaboration with the Flemish Bar Association.
 - o Specific attention to women with disabilities (research on relational and sexual education in special education, supporting sex workers who engage with persons with disabilities ...).

Communauté française, Wallonie et COCOF

- Reconnaissance de 5 collectifs d'associations en vue de mener des actions de prévention et de lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes (violences sexuelles, conjugales, mariages forcés, mutilations génitales féminines et violences liées à l'honneur).
- Lancement, par la Communauté française, la Wallonie et la COCOF, d'un appel à projets visant à prévenir et lutter contre les violences gynécologiques et obstétricales (2022).

- Financement d'un service d'aide aux personnes ayant des fantasmes sexuels avec des mineurs en vue de prévenir le passage à l'acte (Ligne d'écoute, tchat) SéOS, Stop it now (2022).
- Ouverture de place d'hébergement hypersécurisées pour mineur-es à risque ou victimes de violences liées à l'honneur ou mariage forcé (2021)
- Lancement d'un appel à projets visant à soutenir des projets de prévention et de lutte contre le harcèlement sexiste et sexuel dans les hautes écoles d'Art (2021).
- La Communauté française (Ministère en collaboration avec l'ARES (Académie de Recherche et d'Enseignement supérieur), le ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur et la ministre des Droits des Femmes) ont lancé en 2019 un processus participatif visant à inclure des contenus de cours sur les violences faites aux femmes dans la formation initiale et continuée des (futurs) professionnel-les des secteurs du médical et paramédical, du psycho-social, des média et communication, du juridique. Les travaux ont abouti à des recommandations et une liste des contenus de cours minimaux recommandés pour les 4 secteurs professionnels sur 4 formes de violences (conjugale, sexuelles, MGF, mariage forcé et violences liées à l'honneur). En 2022, l'ARES a débuté les travaux de réflexion sur la faisabilité de l'introduction de ces contenus.
- Sensibilisation des candidats et candidates à la fonction de cadres sportifs et sportives de la Communauté française aux questions de violences de genre à l'occasion de leur formation. Le module de déontologie comprend un volet de sensibilisation à la violence de genre.

2.3 changements institutionnels.

Afin d'impliquer davantage la société civile dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre, du monitoring et de l'évaluation de la politique en matière de violences basées sur le genre, la Belgique a mise en place en juin 2022 une plateforme nationale chargée d'assurer le suivi indépendant du PAN 2021-2025. Bénéficiant d'un financement annuel, elle doit notamment remettre des avis lors des évaluations intermédiaire et finale dudit PAN.

2.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Les autorités belges se sont engagées dans l'amélioration des statistiques ventilées par sexe en adoptant différentes mesures en matière de statistiques dans le cadre du PAN 2021-2025, dont, notamment, les mesures 17, 18 et 19 portant respectivement sur les statistiques policières, judiciaires et liées au monde du travail. Plus spécifiquement, un groupe de travail « statistiques », composé des représentant-e-s des principales administrations ou instances fédérales, communautaires, régionales en charge de la collecte des statistiques basées sur le genre, s'est mis en place en mai 2022. Placé sous la coordination de l'Institut pour l'égalité des femmes et des hommes, ce groupe de travail doit poursuivre ses travaux jusqu'au terme du PAN 2021-2025.

The Federal State, the Communities and the Regions to the implementation of the Gender Based Violence Survey, a Eurostat population survey that aims at measuring gender-based violence in Belgium.

A l'initiative de la secrétaire d'Etat fédérale à l'Égalité des genres, une campagne de sensibilisation pour lutter contre les violences basées sur le genre et intrafamiliales, à la suite de la deuxième vague de COVID-19, s'est déroulée en novembre et décembre 2021. Intitulée « *Act Against Violence* », cette campagne a eu pour objectif de réaliser une communication ciblée et une vaste communication publique au niveau national afin de prévenir les violences basées sur le genre et intrafamiliales, notamment en permettant une prise de conscience des phénomènes de violences, de sensibiliser la population pour que chacun et chacune relaye à ses proches, exposés ou susceptibles d'être exposés à ces violences, les informations concernant les numéros d'appels existants (voisins, collègues, employeurs) et de permettre aux victimes d'être orientées vers les services spécialisés.

Flanders

- The Flemish government launched an assignment to develop an awareness-raising module for young people between 14 and 23 about sexuality, indicating and respecting boundaries, breaking myths about sexual violence, etc.
- In 2021-2022, a large-scale survey on gender-related violence will be conducted among families in Flanders. This field research is co-ordinated by Eurostat in order to obtain comparable data within European member states.
- At the start of the new academic year '22, the Flemish Gender Chamber is launching a awareness campaign on (sexual) harassment, with a focus on the higher education environment.
- 1712, the professional helpline for questions regarding violence, abuse and child maltreatment launched several campaigns that focused on domestic violence and intimate partner violence.
- In December 2021, 1712 launched a campaign together with Febelhair to higher the awareness regarding domestic violence.
- The Department of Wellbeing, Public Health and Family supports the project '#CAVASa2.0.', a co-operation between the Flemish Network of Pharmacists and the Centres for General Welfare Work.
- The centres for victims of human trafficking and some forms of smuggling invested on awareness raising for Ukrainian refugees and the general public on different forms of human trafficking.
- The results of the 'Stop it Now!' helpline were evaluated and found to be positive. The financing of the 'Stop it Now!' helpline has been extended until the end of 2024.
- The investigation into the counselling and treatment of sex offenders in prison was finalised. The Flemish government is now working on the recommendations that resulted from this research.

Communauté française, Wallonie et COCOF

- Campagne de visibilité des lignes d'écoute et tchats relatifs aux violences sexuelles (victimes majeures et mineures) via 4 spots (2021)
- Lancement d'une recherche sur le harcèlement sexuel et sexiste dans les établissements d'enseignement supérieur (2022)
- Mise en place de groupe de travail constitué des services de membres du comité de suivi du plan droits des femmes pour la réalisation d'une campagne de sensibilisation sur la lutte contre les stéréotypes de genre
- Campagne de sensibilisation relative à l'arbitrage intitulée « #TousPourL'Arbitre » <https://aes-aisf.be/campagne-arbitrage/> amenée en collaboration avec l'AES et l' AISF (Association des Etablissements Sportifs et Association Interfédérale du Sport Francophone).
- Campagne #plus sportive <https://plus-sportives.cfwb.be/> lancée en 2020 et poursuivie jusqu'en 2024. Cette campagne prévoit notamment la visibilité d'une boîte à outils réalisée par le Conseil de l'Europe pour viser une parité de genre dans le sport, la mise à disposition des clubs et centre sportifs d'un kit de communication pour les réseaux sociaux et la mise en avant d'initiatives réalisée par des Club sportifs pour promouvoir la pratique sportive des femmes.

2.5 autres développements pertinents

Compte tenu des résultats concluants des Centres de Prise en charge des Violences Sexuelles (CPVS) mis sur pied depuis novembre 2017, l'Etat fédéral a approuvé l'extension des CPVS afin que leur nombre passe de trois à dix d'ici 2023. Implanté en structure hospitalière, un CPVS permet aux victimes de violences sexuelles d'obtenir toute l'assistance possible en un seul endroit, 24h/24, en ce compris la possibilité de déposer plainte. Actuellement, il existe sept CPVS en Belgique dont

quatre ouverts en novembre 2021 et juin 2022. En 2023, trois autres CPVS ouvriront. L'objectif est de permettre à chaque victime de violences sexuelles de trouver un CPVS à maximum 1h de chez elle.

3. Objectif stratégique : garantir aux femmes l'égalité d'accès à la justice

3.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Niveau fédéral

Dans le cadre de l'appel à projets « [Tant qu'il le faudra !](#) » lancé par le gouvernement fédéral et destiné à soutenir l'égalité des femmes et des hommes, le projet « Fem&LAW » a pour objectif de vérifier que les femmes et les hommes sont effectivement traités de la même façon par les professionnels du droit. Pour ce faire, une étude qualitative sera menée auprès de magistrats, afin de déterminer scientifiquement dans quelle mesure les stéréotypes de genre se perpétuent au sein des instances judiciaires. L'ensemble devrait mener à une conclusion globale qui consisterait à clarifier si les différences de traitement éventuelles constituent un phénomène structurel, ou des incidents ponctuels et de plus en plus rares.

3.5 autres développements pertinents

Flanders

In Flanders, co-operation has been set up between the first-line legal aid committees and the sexual assault centres. Victims of sexual violence will be given the opportunity to seek legal advice very soon after the occurrence of sexual violence, even before they file a complaint, if they wish so. Trained lawyers will assist them with questions on the procedure, filing a complaint, their rights, etc. In addition, victims can also be prepared for questioning by the police.

4. Objectif stratégique : assurer une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique

4.3 changements institutionnels

Flanders

The in 2021 adopted Decree of the Flemish Government on first-line legal aid contains provisions on gender-balanced representation. Stating in its article 11 that no more than 2/3rd of the commissions for first-line legal aid members' can be of the same sex.

Communauté française

Lancement d'un marché public destiné à financer un prestataire externe pour la réalisation d'une étude visant à évaluer l'application du décret du 3 avril 2014 visant à promouvoir la participation équilibrée d'hommes et de femmes dans les organes consultatifs de la Communauté française.

4.5 autres développements pertinents

Flanders

In June 2022 a new report on the equal participation of women and men in the advisory and administrative bodies of the Flemish government was published. The Flemish government reports to the Flemish Parliament on the implementation of the decree every four years, based on figures from the Organization Register. When comparing data from 2018 and 2022, we see an increase of the complying bodies from 62.21% to 70.20%. But there still is a long way to go.

Communauté française

Financement par la Communauté française, dans le cadre de l'appel à projets Alter Egaes 2021, de projets visant spécifiquement à améliorer la représentation des femmes dans tous les secteurs professionnels et à tous les niveaux dans les instances de décision et postes à responsabilités relevant des compétences de la Communauté française. Cet appel a permis de financer 20 projets pour un montant de 350.000 EUR.

Processus de reconnaissance de 3 Collectifs d'associations œuvrant pour une meilleure représentativité des femmes dans le champ des politiques culturelles par le comité de suivi du Plan Droits des femmes de la Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles et faisant suite au décret du 7 janvier 2016 relatif à l'intégration de la dimension de genre dans l'ensemble des politiques de la Communauté française modifié le 14 juillet 2021. Ces collectifs sont reconnus pour mettre un œuvre un plan d'actions de 5 ans autour notamment de la thématique de la présence, place et participation des femmes.

Adoption par le Gouvernement de la Communauté française, le 14 juillet 2022, d'un arrêté portant exécution du décret du 14 octobre 2021 relatif au renforcement de la féminisation des noms de métier, fonction, grade ou titre et aux bonnes pratiques non discriminatoires quant au genre dans le cadre des communications officielles ou formelles.

https://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/mopdf/2022/08/19_1.pdf#Page244

5. Objectif stratégique : protéger les droits des femmes et des filles migrantes, réfugiées et demandeuses d'asile

5.1 changements législatifs

Niveau fédéral

En ce qui concerne la réforme de la législation sur le regroupement familial, le bureau d'études de l'Office des étrangers a analysé la position juridique des victimes de violences domestiques et leur impact sur le permis de séjour, notamment lorsque ce permis de séjour dépend de celui de leur époux(se) ou partenaire reconnu. Les conditions d'octroi d'un séjour illimité ont été étudiées, de même que les restrictions pouvant découler des conditions imposées au séjour.

Cette analyse vise à disposer d'un regard plus clair sur le cadre légal et les obligations internationales, qui permet au gouvernement de tenir compte des aspects liés au genre dans le cadre d'une éventuelle modification de la loi. Cette analyse permettra également d'établir un monitoring de la nouvelle législation en définissant au préalable les statistiques genrées qui seront tenues à jour.

5.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Niveau fédéral

Le gouvernement fédéral a pris plusieurs mesures destinées à lutter contre la traite des êtres humains et à améliorer la prise en charge des victimes :

- Financement de centres d'accueil pour les victimes de la traite des êtres humains en 2022 - mise en œuvre et ancrage législatif dans la loi du 21 mars 2022 modifiant le Code pénal en ce qui concerne le droit pénal sexuel.
- Garanties concernant les risques d'exploitation dans la loi du 21 mars 2022 modifiant le Code pénal en ce qui concerne le droit pénal sexuel.
- Campagne « Cœur Bleu » des Nations Unies le 30 juillet 2022 avec diverses initiatives au niveau fédéral et dans les grandes villes de Belgique.
- Répétition de la campagne « *Blind betting* » sur l'exploitation sexuelles (dans des gares).

Flanders

The Flemish government supports the FMDO project: "Listening ears for Ukrainian women in Flanders and Brussels" in reaction to the sexual violence problem. Project starts on 15 September and runs for one year. Budget 97K. 'Listening ears' are trained women from different communities who act as confidants for (potential) victims. They can do this via phone (hotline) but also in informal group discussions with women. Signals concerning violence are collected and passed on to the relevant services. The listening ears are therefore the intermediaries who provide a warm referral to the local assistance services.

Centres for General Welfare in Flanders: Primary psychosocial care for Ukrainian refugees and their direct social environment

Since the start of the current crisis, the Flemish government took different measures within the domain of Welfare, Public Health and Family. One of these measures consists of the reinforcement of the 11 Centres for General Welfare (CAW, Centra Algemeen Welzijnswerk) in Flanders and Brussels in function of primary psychosocial care for Ukrainian refugees and their direct social environment. By direct social environment we mean the host families, as they are also confronted with psychosocial questions and needs. This policy is not categorically aimed at female refugees. Yet, the vast majority of the reached group are women (cf. Influx of refugees). The offered support is free, accessible and proactive. If it appears from the primary care that specialised trauma treatment is necessary, the client will be guided in a warm, caring manner to a (more specialised) mental health centre. With a total budget of €2.659.500, we aim at reaching 2700 persons. When 70% of this target (i.e., 1890 persons) has been achieved, it will be evaluated whether or not this measure will be upscaled. The proportion of reached women with this measure is 73% (cf. quarterly report by CAW). The Centres for General Welfare report biweekly (focus on numbers) and quarterly (more profoundly) on the progress of this measure. The execution of this measure is followed up by a mixed (administration, cabinet and CAW) steering group. Current available reports (latest available biweekly report: 08 Aug.) learn that more than 1100 persons were helped. Main issues of concern are: psychological well-being, administrative support, income and (social) benefits, stress and carrying capacity.

More information can be found in this leaflet² (also available in Ukrainian, Russian and Dutch).

5.3 changements institutionnels

Niveau fédéral

Le gouvernement belge a mis sur pied un groupe de travail spécifique ‘abus’ pour la coordination des initiatives dans le domaine du soutien et de la protection psycho-sociale pour des réfugiés ukrainiens ainsi qu’une Task force spéciale de lutte contre la traite des êtres humains. L’Institut pour l’égalité des femmes et des hommes fait partie de ce groupe de travail et apporte son expertise pour le développement d’instruments spécifiques notamment une « check-list » pour la détection des signes possibles de violence contre les réfugiés ukrainiens. Cette check list a été élaborée avec des organisations de migrants et des réfugiés ukrainiens.

Flanders

In 2021 a Task Force was set up to co-ordinate the Ukrainian refugee challenges, tasked to:

- map and increase the local supply in an up-to-date and accurate manner
- make practical arrangements with the federal authorities about the allotment of persons in function of the local reality and carrying capacity
- maintain an overview of the specific measures of the Flemish policy areas
- collecting and disseminating relevant information for the local administrations, the Flemish policy sectors and the federal level
- to act as a single point of contact for the Flemish Government, the local administrations and the federal level
- to co-ordinate the supply and demand for volunteer initiatives for Ukrainian refugees.

² https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ob9BaLTqrL6s4fTvd7brQhrfqnlP_jvG/view

5.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Niveau fédéral

Afin de bien cerner la situation des femmes et des hommes dans les centres ouverts et fermés pour réfugiés, Fedasil et l'Office des étrangers du SPF Intérieur ont entrepris des démarches pour systématiquement ventiler les statistiques selon le genre. Disposer de statistiques ventilées par sexe est une première étape indispensable pour pouvoir déceler d'éventuelles différences entre la situation des femmes et celle des hommes et en tenir compte dans le cadre de la gestion des centres ou dans le cadre d'éventuelles évolutions réglementaires ou législatives.

5.5 autres développements pertinents

Niveau fédéral

Dans les centres ouverts pour réfugiés (centres Fedasil), la dimension de genre a été prise en compte dans le cadre de l'élimination des obstacles à l'accès à la vie sociale des résidents qui prévoit que les demandeurs de protection internationale bénéficient d'un trajet d'accompagnement qui met l'accent sur la participation à la société, ainsi que d'une offre complémentaire en matière d'acquisition de compétences, d'emploi et d'entrepreneuriat.

Un « groupe de coordination gender mainstreaming » (CGM) a été établi au sein du SPF Intérieur. Le 1er décembre 2021, lors d'une réunion avec les représentants des directions de tous les centres fermés pour réfugiés, différentes actions genrées à réaliser au sein des centres ont été examinées. Chaque centre fermé a choisi un thème lié au genre et déterminé la façon dont il souhaitait y travailler en 2022.

Points abordés : attention à la gestion des victimes de violences sexuelles, à l'homophobie parmi les résidents, aux contacts avec les résidents transgenres (note de service), activités pour les résidents sur un thème lié au genre, sensibilisation à l'égalité des genres, formation pour le personnel.

Objectifs poursuivis : meilleure compréhension et attention accrue pour les questions de genre, personne de contact permanente dans chaque centre pour le CGM, meilleure évaluation des besoins des centres en termes de genre, facilitation des demandes de soutien concernant les problématiques et besoins spécifiques liés au genre, mise en œuvre de la note de service sur les personnes transgenres.

Communauté française

Soutien à la diffusion des outils de la [campagne ACCESS](#), visant à faciliter l'accès à la prévention, à la protection et à l'accompagnement des femmes migrantes en Europe confrontées à la violence sexiste (en 13 langues).

6. Objectif stratégique : intégrer les questions d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans toutes les politiques et mesures

6.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Niveau fédéral

L'IEFH qui est chargé par la 'loi gender mainstreaming' d'encadrer la mise en œuvre du gender mainstreaming au niveau fédéral belge a coordonné l'adoption d'un nouveau Plan fédéral Gender mainstreaming qui a été adopté par le gouvernement en juin 2021. Ce plan couvre l'actuelle législature (2020-2024). Il contient près de 200 engagements des membres du gouvernement à intégrer la dimension de genre dans le cadre de politiques relevant de leurs compétences.

Un premier rapport semestriel de suivi relatif à la mise en œuvre du plan fédéral a été présenté au Conseil des ministres début 2022. Sur base de ce rapport de suivi, l'IEFH a adressé des

commentaires et des recommandations relatives à la mise en œuvre des engagements pris dans le cadre du plan à l'ensemble des membres du gouvernement. Un second rapport semestriel de suivi a été présenté au Conseil des ministres au mois de septembre 2022. Il sera suivi d'un rapport de mi-législature au Parlement.

Certaines réformes ou projets de réformes structurelles ont déjà été établies en tenant compte de la dimension de genre (ex : réforme des pensions ou projet de réforme fiscale).

Communauté française

Poursuite de la mise en œuvre du gender mainstreaming par la budgétisation sensible au genre, le test d'impact sur l'égalité femmes-hommes et la reprise de formations à destination du personnel de l'administration et des cabinets Ministériel en Communauté française.

6.3 changements institutionnels

Niveau fédéral

Suite à la mise en place d'un nouveau gouvernement fédéral début 2020, des « coordinateurs gender mainstreaming » ont été désignés au sein de l'ensemble des cabinets ministériels et des administrations fédérales. Ces personnes représentent leurs ministres et leurs administrations au sein d'un groupe interdépartemental de coordination (GIC).

6.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Niveau fédéral

Suite à l'adoption d'un Plan fédéral Gender mainstreaming, des formations au gender mainstreaming ont été organisées dans de nombreux cabinets ministériels de fin 2021 à fin 2022. Au total, près de 250 membres de cabinets ministériels ont été formés au gender mainstreaming.

Communauté française

Depuis fin 2021 : évaluation du test genre permettant d'évaluer l'impact d'une décision gouvernementale sur la situation des femmes et des hommes.

6.5 Autres développements pertinents,

Communauté française

Février 2022 : lancement d'un appel à projets visant la formation continue des professionnel-le-s des différents secteurs culturels à l'approche inclusive du genre. Cet appel lancé par différentes administrations du Ministère de la Communauté française a permis de financer 7 projets s'inscrivant à la fois dans la formation, la réalisation de séminaires ou journées d'études, d'accompagnement et de créations d'outils pédagogiques pour un montant de 30.000 EUR.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

The House of Representatives (“HoP”) of the Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (“FBiH”) adopted the Code of Ethics, which prohibits discrimination in all forms and on all grounds, including harassment based on gender and sexual harassment. The Ethics Commission of the HoP will supervise the behaviour of representatives.

The Law on Protection against Harassment at Work was adopted in the Republic of Srpska (“RS”). The law prescribes a procedure for protection against harassment at work and stipulates that the employer is obliged to provide effective protection against harassment at work and to inform and educate workers about harassment at work.

1.2 Policy changes

As of September 2022, 64 of the Institutions of BiH have adopted decisions on zero tolerance policy on gender-based harassment and appointed the advisors for prevention of harassment, based on the Guide for the Prevention of Gender-Based Harassment and Sexual Harassment in the Institutions of BiH, developed by the Gender Equality Agency of BiH of Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BiH (“GEA BiH/MHRR”). To now, GEA BiH/MHRR and the Civil Service Agency BiH organised three basic and two advanced trainings for the appointed advisors.

The Gender Centre of Republika Srpska (“GCRS”) developed the General Protocol for Preventing and Dealing with Cases of Sexual Violence, which was adopted by the Co-ordinating Committee of the RS for monitoring the implementation of GAP BiH in the RS. The general protocol contributes to the awareness of all employees in competent ministries, bodies and organisations about the importance of an integrated and multidisciplinary approach to solving such cases, as well as the need to report sexual violence. The protocol is enabling special gender-sensitive procedures and procedures with victims to prevent secondary victimisation, and the gradual institutionalisation of internal procedures and practices in this regard.

The Gender Centre of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (“GCFBiH”) is currently preparing Guidelines for prevention and protection against gender-based and sexual harassment in the workplace in federal administrative bodies.

Action Plan for Improving the Position of Rural Women in the RS for the period 2022 – 2024 was adopted. Programmes, measures and indicators for monitoring the implementation were developed, the bearers of responsibility were defined. The goals of this three-year plan are: improving the economic position of women in the countryside; improvement of gender equality in the rural sector and social empowerment of rural women; ensuring adequate living conditions, health and social protection, as well as protection from violence for rural women.

Under auspices of Financial Instrument for implementation of the Gender Action Plan of BiH (“FIGAP 2”), two programmes dealing with promotion of products of rural women, and strengthening women-entrepreneurs have been implemented in the RS, providing incentives for women and strengthening capacities through training and the promotion of women’s entrepreneurship, in line with the Strategy for the Development of Women’s Entrepreneurship of the RS (2019 – 2023). Additionally, through a joint project between GCRS and “Diaspora for Development” devoted to women’s entrepreneurship, capacities of women with an entrepreneurial spirit were strengthened to develop and start their own businesses, through “Design Thinking” - application of innovative methods of developing entrepreneurial ideas.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

GEA BiH/MHRR has conducted a research on gender pay gap in BiH, in co-operation with statistical institutions. Once completed, the survey will provide additional information on status of gender equality and basis for better defining of goals and measures within the next Gender Action Plan in BiH ("GAP") for the period 2023 - 2027.

GEA BiH/MHRR has implemented an informative public campaign to raise awareness on rights under the CEDAW Convention and the tasks facing BiH to implement the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee. Video-clips and infographics were published in media and via social-networks. (Paid ads on Facebook: reach 93,728 and 247,706 impressions; Google ads: 1,793,479 impressions, 6,651 clicks and 64 emissions at main public and commercial TV-channels.)

With support of Council of Europe, Communications Regulatory Agency ("CRA") conducted study on gender representation and participation in the media, in context of developing the media and information literacy in BiH, interventions for encouraging and nurturing critical thinking about gender and representations of gender in media.

The GCRS marked "International Men's Day" by promoting and emphasizing the positive role of men who appeal for better health and social services, better working conditions and protection at work, for the improvement of education and professional development and a dignified life. Additionally, the GCRS celebrated "Girls in ICT Day", by organising online debates and surveys were organised about the role and contribution of women to ICT.

Under auspices of the FIGAP 2 program, GEA BiH/MHRR, GCFBiH and GCRS provided grants to NGOs for the projects aimed at raising awareness of the Roma community about violence, begging, child labour, and underage marriages, as well as empowering Roma women through education about their rights and analyses for improvement of lives of Roma women. In addition, the GCRS supported 12 workshops held for women with disabilities, of which six were psychological and six were legal, aimed at raising awareness of all forms of gender-based violence.

Ministry of Family, Youth and Sports of the RS launched the campaign "Be different, block hate!", which aims to point out the negative consequences of hate speech, especially among young people when it comes to social networks and any other type of internet-platforms.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

GEA BiH/MHRR published a public Recommendation Regarding Gender Stereotypes, Misogyny and Sexist Speech, in view of the upcoming General elections in BiH 2022, to draw attention of the media, political actors and the general public towards non-acceptance of sexist and misogynistic portrayal of women politicians in the media.

GCFBiH continuously promotes and encourages the media on the need for a balanced representation of women in the media and the need for refraining from the reproduction of gender stereotypes and prejudices, sexism, misogyny and hate speech.

GCFBiH's staff are engaged as educators on the subject of media reporting on gender-based violence and domestic violence within the Journalism Academy organised by Media Centre Sarajevo.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The draft Law on protection against domestic violence in FBiH and the draft Law on amendments to the Criminal Code FBiH were adopted with the aim of harmonizing with the Istanbul Convention and the CoE Convention on the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.

In February 2022, the General Protocol on handling Cases of Domestic Violence in the RS was adopted. The protocol was agreed and signed by the RS ministries responsible for justice, internal affairs, health and social protection, education, administration and local self-government, and the family. The purpose of this act is to ensure co-ordinated, efficient and comprehensive work of all competent protection entities.

2.2 Policy changes

In March 2022, the Action Plan for Suppression and Prevention of Domestic Violence for 2022 in the RS was adopted as an implementing, operational act of the Strategy for Suppression of Domestic Violence (2020 – 2024).

2.3 Institutional changes

In the reporting period, the GEA BiH/MHRR allocated grant funds to support shelters for victims of gender-based violence in BiH in the total amount of BAM 100,000.00 from the budget of the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of BiH ("MHRR"). Also, the funds are ensured for the next year for supporting for shelters. In co-operation with the relevant federal ministries and GCFBiH, GEA BiH/MHRR strengthened the capacities of the social work centres and centres for mental health to deal with cases of violence against women and to work with perpetrators. Additionally, the GEA BiH/MHRR provided grants in the amount of BAM 235,000 to healthcare institutions in three major cities for establishing of the Crisis Centres for Victims of Rape and Sexual Violence.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

The Council of Europe's GREVIO Committee adopted the (Baseline) Evaluation Report for BiH. Based on the findings, BiH will develop an action plan for further implementation of the Istanbul Convention. GEA BiH/MHRR, GC FBiH and the GCRS, as the Co-ordinating Bodies of the for monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention at their respective levels of government, participated in the evaluation process by managing and co-ordinating all meetings, exchange and further distribution of information, data and documents.

GEA BiH/MHRR, GCRS and GCFBiH signed with the betting company "Mozzart" a Protocol on Collaboration for awareness raising on prevention of gender-based violence. Numerous famous personalities took part in the awareness campaign; among other, FC Inter's Edin Džeko and Mirza Teletović of the NBA's fame, as well as several premier league football teams, posed in the T-shirt with slogan "Stop violence against women!". The action is carried out through continuous donations and visits to safe houses.

In November 2021, the GEA BiH/MHRR launched a public campaign for the prevention of gender-based violence, with slogans: "Stop the Cycle of Violence" and "Free Yourself as Well". Billboards posted in six largest cities, while radio-jingles, advertisements and animated web-advertising (banners) were broadcasted on major websites (543,197 impressions), Google (3,757,306 displays), YouTube (34,411 views and 202,598 impressions), Instagram and Facebook (3,248,370 impressions).

GC FBiH has distributed promotional leaflets with information on types of domestic violence, methods of reporting and subjects of protection, which are adapted to blind and partially sighted people, including the SOS telephone number 1265 printed in Braille. The campaign of short video

clips with the aim of strengthening inter-partner relations and communication with children, which has so far reached around 4,500,000 citizens, continued.

Through the campaigns: "White ribbon - Male violence against women" and "Stop violence against women" with the slogan "Violence against women is a crime", GCRS promoted zero tolerance for violence against women and domestic violence, and promoted the amendments to the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence and the Criminal Code of the RS, which were additionally harmonised with the Istanbul Convention. The campaigns were conducted online on the GCRS website, on the web portal of the Government of the RS and on the Facebook. Highest officials of the RS and the media wore white ribbons while the campaigns were also supported by athletes and NGOs.

GCRS is strengthening access to better quality multi-sectoral services for survivors of violence against women and domestic violence at the local level through organising trainings for representatives of municipalities (including police, centres for social work, health institutions, judicial authorities, regional offices for providing free legal aid, educational institutions, local self-government units, NGOs and the media). Procedures of the relevant stakeholders in cases of domestic violence were addressed, institutional response to violence against women and domestic violence, as well as inter-agency and inter-sectoral co-operation at the local level improved.

GCRS signed a Memorandum of Co-operation with the NGO Institute for Population and Development of BiH for the project dealing with application of a comprehensive socio-ecological and model based on the active participation of communities in the elimination of violence against women in BiH, introducing innovative approaches in the prevention of violence and the promotion of healthy lifestyles among young men and women, and strengthening the co-operation of local communities, NGOs and schools.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

As part of the FIGAP 2 program, GCFBIH organised five training sessions for judges, prosecutors, police officers and social workers on the topic "Application of regulations in the field of domestic violence", which were attended by nearly 150 people. In this way, the entire multisector teams working on cases of domestic violence in all ten cantons were additionally strengthened.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.3 Institutional changes

The High Judicial and Prosecutorial Council of BiH's ("HJPC") efforts to improve procedures in cases of discrimination continued with the creation of Instructions for the use of the updated Case Management System ("CMS") Codebook for Discrimination Procedures. The Instruction is addressing part of the CMS that refers to cases of discrimination, clarifying the entry of the mandatory attributes into the CMS and ensuring consistent data entry.

The co-operation between HJPC and Trial International resulted in a faster resolution of enforcement proceedings in cases of execution of awarded property-legal claims in cases of wartime sexual violence. A technical solution was created and implemented, which included the addition of a new legal basis for execution in the CMS system and the introduction of an urgency label for the same.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

Following adoption, in 2020, of the Strategy for Gender Equality in the Judiciary, the implementation process continued intensively in the reporting period. In four judicial institutions, a pilot phase was implemented and a document developed in which the good practices of implementing the Strategy were presented, which will be applied in other judicial institutions. Target judicial institutions established working groups and appointed employees as "ambassadors" who will support other judicial institutions of BiH in the process of implementing the Strategy. Also, educational workshops were held with representatives of all 102 judicial institutions in BiH on the topic of creating action plans for the implementation of the Strategy.

For the first time, as part of the training and professional development programme of the centres for the training of judges and prosecutors in the two BIH entities, a seminar on the topic "Members of vulnerable groups as witnesses in proceedings" was realised, in partnership with the AIRE (Advice on Individual Rights in Europe) Centre.

The co-operation of GC FBIH and the Faculty of Political Sciences of the University of Sarajevo resulted in the analysis of curricula and programmes at the faculties in Sarajevo Canton, as well as proposals for the improvement of documents on the topic of domestic violence and violence against women. A survey of teaching staff and students was also carried out.

In co-operation with the Centre for the Education of Judges and Public Prosecutors of the RS, GCRS organised a training on challenges in the implementation of the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence of the RS. Topics related to the prosecution of criminal cases with emphasis on: investigation, proof, co-operation of authorised officials (police) and prosecutors in the reporting phase and imposition of protective measures such as: mandatory psychosocial treatment and mandatory treatment from addiction. This training is part of continuous activities to improve the work of judicial bodies with the aim of more efficient implementation of the law and better protection of victims from domestic violence.

The Association "Women's Network of the Women police-officers of the RS " organised four trainings for police officers on the topic "Strengthening the Capacity of the Police to prevent Sexual Harassment". Awareness has been raised and capacity of police officers strengthened to prevent sexual harassment, including the legal procedures for their actions, and in accordance with the valid domestic and international normative-legal framework.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.2 Policy changes

Ahead of the General Elections 2022 in BiH, GEA BIH/MHRR has sent to the political parties a Gender Equality Pledge for the Political Parties, to be signed. Developed in consultation with representatives of women's forums of political parties and CSOs, and with support of the OSCE, the Pledge demonstrates genuine commitment and serious intentions of political parties towards gender mainstreaming and progressing towards gender equality.

4.3 Institutional changes

In December 2021, the RS Government adopted the GCRS's Report on Progress in the Application of Normative-legal Standards for Gender Equality in the field of Political and Public Life in the RS for the period 2019 - 2020. Data show that women are still underrepresented, especially in the highest positions in the legislature, as well as in international relations and diplomacy, while there is a visible improvement in the judicial and executive branches in the representation of women. Based on the established situation, work will continue towards further harmonisation of the normative - legal framework that regulates the election process, encourages the harmonisation of family and professional life, i.e., public duties, and conduct education and campaigns with the aim of raising the awareness of the electorate and the entire population about the need for equal participation of women and men in the public and political sphere.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

GEA BiH/MHRR has conducted an assessment of gender equality in political life in BiH, carried out according to OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights ("ODIHR") Methodology on Assessments of Gender Equality in Political Life. The goal of the assessment is to present the current state of gender equality in the political life of BiH according to the obligations arising from the Law on Gender Equality in BiH ("GEL BiH"), as well as the Election Law of BiH, international standards and best practices. The findings and results of the assessment inform the development of gender strategies and policies, including the new GAP BIH for the period 2023 - 2027.

GEA BIH/MHRR undertook the analysis of the rights of mothers and parenthood in BiH and developed the Framework Guidelines for the Protection of Human Rights of Mothers and Development of Parenthood in BiH. Aim of the analysis is to identify shortcomings and indicate opportunities and needs to ensure a better position of mothers and the development of parenthood in BiH. This document analyses and presents the current situation in this area, emphasizing all the limitations, but also the possibilities for development of new or improving existing policies for protection of mothers through legal acts at all levels in BiH, resulting in the Framework Guidelines, to be issued publicly, as well as submitted to the relevant institutional stakeholders.

The GEA BIH/MHRR has implemented the Project "Leadership Academy" in partnership with of the Faculty of Economics in Sarajevo. Capacities of 27 representatives of political parties have been strengthened in leadership with special focus on topics such as media, improving the position of multiply marginalised groups of women, reconciling private and professional life and the role of men.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

Through the FIGAP 2 program, the Council of Europe's Recommendation CM/REC (2019) was implemented in such a way that the GCFBIH created a document with a set of recommendations for the protection of women from violence in political parties with the aim of raising public awareness about recognizing and opposing sexism in public and private sphere.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.3 Institutional changes

Every year, the Ministry of Security of BiH publishes the "Migration Profile of BiH " in which the data is classified by gender, which enables the continuous monitoring of trends in the gender structure of migrants and the creation of gender-sensitive policies. In order to define the profile of foreign citizens who applied for and received a residence permit for temporary or permanent residence in BiH in 2021, the gender and age structure is presented. 44% of temporary residence permits were issued to women, while women were issued 59% of residence permits for permanent stay. Compared to 2020, there is a trend of increasing number of women who submitted or received a request for temporary or permanent residence in BiH.

Progress has been made in ensuring the conditions for women in the centres for the reception of migrants. In November 2021, a new and the largest centre in BiH was opened by decision of the Council of Ministers of BiH (“CoM”) in the municipality of Bihać (west of BiH). The centre is divided into three zones: a zone for single men, with a current capacity of 960 places (planned 1,000 places); a zone for unaccompanied minors, with a current capacity of 120 places (planned 200 places) and a zone for families with children, with a current capacity of 228 places (planned 330 places).

5.4 Research and awareness raising

In co-operation with the BiH Women's Initiative, the GEA BiH/MHRR meet with civil society and international organisations working with migrant women to exchange information and to map the problems. The issue of prevention of violence was particularly tackled, and it was stated that the biggest problem is violence that takes place outside the reception centres for migrants.

Under auspices of FIGAP 2, the GEA BiH/MHRR supported the project through which access of women and girl-migrants, who were victims of sexual and gender-based violence to information about the rights and possibilities of protection from violence as well as the right to access to specialised legal aid services was strengthened. A Manual for Migrants has been produced and translated into four languages, including Urdu, Pashtu, Arabic and Persian, printed and distributed to three migrant centres.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

The Ministry of Finance and Treasury of BiH has given the instruction to the budget beneficiaries on gender aspect related to issuing grants and transfers. In particular, according to the Law on the Budget of BiH Institutions, the final beneficiaries of current grants and transfers must include the gender aspect when allocating grants and transfers, as well as when reporting on the intended use of funds. Additionally, Instruction for preparation of requests for allocation of funds from the Budget for 2022 sets forth that in the context of each of the programmes, where applicable, it is necessary to include the dimension of gender equality and explain it in the text.

6.2 Policy changes

With the period of implementation of the current 3rd Gender Action Plan of BiH (GAP BiH) coming to an end this year, GEA BiH/MHRR and entity gender centres initiated the process of developing the new GAP BiH for the period 2023 – 2027, including base-line analysis, strategic planning and consultations expected to complete by the end of 2022.

An assessment of the implementation of the Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 (2018 - 2022) with recommendations for improvement was conducted. It will form a basis for development of the new Action plan for the period 2023 – 2027.

In July 2022, Council of Ministers of BiH, at the proposal of the MHRR, adopted the Action Plan for the Advancement of Human Rights and Basic Freedoms of LGBTI Persons in BiH for the period 2021 -2024, first ever such plan for BiH. Development of the Action Plan was co-ordinated by GEA BiH/MHRR. The focus of the Action Plan is the achievement of three goals: equal opportunities and prohibition of discrimination, equal rights in all areas of life and a society respecting diversity.

Law on material support for families with children of the FBiH and the Law on Social Protection Institutions FBiH were adopted and are harmonised with the GEL BiH. The Development Strategy of the FBiH was adopted, which is based on the principles of equal opportunities, non-discrimination, equality between men and women.

When it comes to supporting local self-government units in the introduction and application of standards for gender equality, the GCRS participated in the creation and provided advice during the creation of local gender action plans for further 11 municipalities.

6.3 Institutional changes

The IPA Project EU Gender Equality Facility, which aims to strengthen the authorities to comply with international obligations and the EU gender acquis, has analysed pre-accession capacities of Institutions of BiH and developed a set of recommendations. Emphasis was placed on strengthening relevant sectoral capacities for the implementation of the gender equality perspective in the process of preparation and implementation of IPA pre-accession assistance, as well as in policymaking. Several workshops were held for persons responsible for gender and persons responsible for European integrations in the key institutions from the state and entity levels of government in the selected sectors.

The GEA BiH/MHRR allocated funds from FIGAP 2 for the project of the BiH Ministry of Security of BiH (“MS BiH”) for improvement of knowledge and capacities in the area of gender equality, providing basic and advanced training for the appointed/newly appointed contact persons for the gender issues at the BiH MS BiH, as well as the implementation of the campaign to raise awareness about the significance of participation of women in the security sector.

For the first time since the adoption of GEL BiH, thanks to the FIGAP 2 program, GCFBiH initiated and supported the adoption of the Gender action plans in five cantons of FBiH. GCFBiH provided technical support to the co-ordination bodies appointed by the cantonal governments, as well as direct work with the gender equality commissions that initiated the drafting of these documents. Also, co-ordination teams were established and action plans adopted in 10 municipalities.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

GEA BiH/MHRR, GCRS and GCFBiH, in partnership with UNWOMEN, are implementing UN campaign “Generation Equality 2021 – 2026”, a multigenerational campaign confirming the significance of commitments undertaken with the Beijing Declaration. Thus far, three “Action Coalitions” were established (on Bodily Autonomy, Sexual and Reproductive Health, Economic Justice and Rights and Gender-Based Violence) and an Advisory Youth Forum was formed. The goal of action coalitions is to provide a common response to challenges, obstacles, identify the problems and offer potential solutions with specific commitments to improve gender equality and empower women and girls in BiH.

An analysis of the legal framework of the Civil Service Agency (“CSA”) of the FBiH was conducted and a proposal prepared for measures to include the principle of gender equality and gender-responsive budgeting in the process of employment and training of civil servants. Candidates who apply for work in the civil service will cover the basic concepts related to the GEL BiH as part of the professional exam. Additionally, an advanced e-module was created as part of the training programme of the CSA on the subject of the implementation of the GEL BiH in the ministries and institutions of the FBiH - through web platforms for video conferences, and with the aim of conducting training based on the content of the concepts of gender equality, discrimination and special measures.

The GCRS, in co-operation with NGOs has strengthened the capacity of the Members of Municipal/city Commissions for Gender Equality for promotion and advocacy for women's rights in 10 local communities of the RS. 30 training courses conducted by GCRS were attended by about 120 participants.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

First ever Gender Equality Index for BiH has been developed, in accordance with the European Institute for Gender Equality's (EIGE) methodology. The Index provides information on two full domains of European Gender Equality Index – „Knowledge“ and „Power“, and two partial domains – „Work “and „Health“, out of the total of six domains. Given that, due to lack of relevant data sources, most notably surveys and gender - disaggregated data, calculation was not possible for all six domains, it was not possible to present the overall Gender Equality Index score for BiH.

Bulgaria

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes .

The Bulgarian Constitution follows the international standard and introduces the term "incitement of enmity" as the main limit of the right to express an opinion under Article 39, paragraph 2 of the Constitution. According to the Constitutional Court, the restriction on speeches that constitute incitement to enmity is based on values such as tolerance and mutual respect enshrined in the Constitution, as well as on the prohibition to propagate hatred on racial, national, ethnic or religious grounds. In a decision, devoted to freedom of speech, the Constitutional Court stated that, by virtue of important international treaties, states can declare as an offense punishable by law the propagation of hatred on racial, national or religious grounds (Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, as well as Articles 162 - 164 of the Criminal Code). The rights that the norms against enmity and hate ("hate speech") protect are of a degree of importance that justifiably opposes the right to freely make such speech. In accordance with these principles in the Bulgarian legislation, these acts are elevated to a crime in Article 162, paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code (NC): Whoever, through speech, print or other means of mass information, through electronic information systems or in any other way preaches or incites discrimination, violence or hatred based on race, nationality or ethnicity, shall be punished with imprisonment from one to four years and a fine from five thousand to ten thousand BGN, as well as public reprimand.

The protection of religious confessions is provided for in the Penal Code in Article 164, which criminalises the same acts as under Article 162, with the same means, but based on a religious basis, and in this crime the prescribed punishment is greater: Who preaches or incites discrimination, violence or hatred on a religious basis through speech, print or other means of mass information, through electronic information systems or in any other way, shall be punished with imprisonment for up to four years or with probation, as well as with a fine of five thousand to ten thousand BGN. Another act that is criminalised and carried out through hate speech is provided for in Article 108 of the Criminal Code. It criminalises as a crime against the republic the preaching of a fascist or other anti-democratic ideology or forcible change of the social and state system established by the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria. The prescribed penalty is imprisonment for up to three years or a fine of up to BGN 5,000.

Clear and direct incitement to genocide is also subject to a criminal sanction, as per Article 416, paragraph 3 of the Criminal Code is punishable by imprisonment from one to eight years.

In Article 419a of the Criminal Code criminalises justifying, denying or grossly belittling in any way the commission of a crime against peace and humanity, which creates a danger of using violence or provoking hatred towards individuals or groups of people united by race, colour, religion, origin, national or ethnic origin.

Protection against hate speech is also provided under the Protection against Discrimination Act, when the act does not fall into the forms raised to a crime. Protection is direct against hate speech when it is directed at different groups or representatives of these groups, united on a certain basis, and above all at their identity, equality and right to self-determination

The Law on Radio and Television imputes with Article 17, paragraph 2 obligation of media service providers not to allow the creation of broadcasts or their provision for distribution in violation of the principles of Article 10 of the Criminal Code, as well as broadcasts inciting intolerance, glorifying or exonerating cruelty or violence. According to the Bulgarian court, when the so-called "hate speech" used in a radio or television broadcast, it is assessed whether there is a specific sign by which a certain group could be identified, in order to justify the corresponding insinuation of intolerance

towards this particular group. Through its Code of Ethics, the Bulgarian media undertake not to publish material inciting or encouraging hatred, violence and any form of discrimination and not to indicate race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical condition, if these facts are not of essential importance about the meaning of the information.

For Example: Bulgarian Academy of science (BAS) adopted a Plan for promotion of equality between women and men for the period 2022-2027, which covers all the main activities resulting from the responsibility of the BAS in accordance with the normative and strategic documents at the European and national level containing prescriptions for the promotion of equality between women and men in science. The academic institutes and others other independent units of BAS declare their commitment and determination to observe strictly the principle of equality between women and men and anti-discrimination based on gender in their activities and also prepared and approved their equality plans.

In March 2022, the Academic Council of the International Business School approve a Plan for equality between women and men for the period 2022-2026, which make the IBS one of the first universities in Bulgaria, approved this kind of plan. The Economic University – Varna also approved a Plan for equality between women and men for the period 2022-2023. As well the Technical University – Sofia and Agrobioinstitute Agriculture Academy also approved Plans for equality between women and men for the period 2022-2026.

There are also other universities and research funding organization who already prepared and approved their action plans.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy is in the process of development of a National action plan for promotion of equality between women and men for the period 2023-2024.

1.2 Policy changes

With the adoption of the Gender Equality Act in 2016 in Bulgaria are functioning the so-called "**gender equality co-ordinators**" at national and regional level. Co-ordinators periodically participate in training to share knowledge, lessons learned and good practices in the field of equality and mainstreaming initiatives of the public authorities.

Under the Commission for Protection against discrimination works **regional representatives**, which are located in 24 of the 28 districts in the country, a fact that is unique in Europe. Their commitment is, in addition to providing independent assistance to citizens, to advise and inform them about the application of the anti-discrimination law, about the powers and rules of proceedings before the Criminal Code, about the legal options for protecting the violated right to equal treatment, including for their procedural powers in the proceedings before the Commission. They assist and support the general will for tolerance, tolerance and the achievement of gender equality in public life.

1.3 Institutional changes e..

In 2022, the composition of the National Council of equality between women and men at the Council of Ministers was renewed. The Council is constantly active, co-ordinating and advising body, which supports the Council of Ministers in the development and implementation of the state policy on gender equality and is a body for provision of consultation, co-operation and co-ordination between central and regional executive bodies and the structures of the civil society. The Council comprises representatives of ministries, state and executive agencies and other authorities, established by law; national organizations representing employers and employees and workers; the National Association of Municipalities in the Republic of Bulgaria; and legal non-profit entities. The main priority areas of the National Council's work are in correspondence with the five priority areas in the National strategy for the promotion of equality between women and men 2021-2030 and the action

plans for its implementation, which are mentioned above. One of these priorities is exactly the overcoming of the stereotypes, existing in different spheres of the public life and sexism.

Persons who feel discriminated against or who need protection and ensuring equality in treatment or in opportunities to participate in public life can contact **the Commission for Protection against Discrimination**. Protection Against Discrimination Act regulate the protection against all forms of discrimination based on sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, human genome, citizenship, origin, religion or belief, education, belief, political affiliation, personal or social status, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, property status or any other grounds established by law or in an international treaty, to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party. The proceedings before the Commission are free of state taxes. The meetings of the Commission are open. The Commission's decisions are subject to appeal in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Code within 14 days of their notification to the interested parties. According to the data prepared by the Commission for Protection against discrimination, Bulgaria under the grounds mentioned above for 2021 there are 629 proceeding before the Commissions based on complains, signals and self-initiative of the Commission. For the period January-September 2022 there are 320 proceedings based on all grounds except the ground "sex".

In connection with the numerous complaints regarding the use of sexual stereotypes in commercial communications received by the National Council for Self-Regulations and on the basis of the National Ethical Rules for Advertising and Commercial Communication in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Ethics Commission of the Council for Self-Regulations accepts that opposition to gender stereotyping is necessary at all levels in society to promote equality and co-operation between women and men in the private and public spheres. In this regard, the National Council for Self-Regulation issues Recommendations on the use of sexual stereotypes in advertising and commercial communication. The Recommendations specifically state that "Advertising and commercial communications should avoid explicit or implicit insinuation of gender subordination, sexual violence and sexism." <https://www.nss-bg.org/pres-kodeks>

1.4 Research and awareness raising

A type of research and a way to measure the implementation of the anti-discrimination policy is the **Report on the equality between women and men**, which the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy prepared annually. In it are involved the results of the implementation of the measures set out in the National strategy for promotion of equality between women and man, national action plans for promotion of equality between women and men and other initiatives. It is adopted by the Council of Ministers. The document reflects the results of the implementation of the policies in five priority areas: equality of women and men in the labour market and equal degree of economic independence, reduction of gender differences in pay and income, promotion of equality of women and men in the processes of taking solutions, combating violence and protecting and supporting victims, overcoming gender stereotypes in various spheres of public life and sexism.

The Commission for Protection against Discrimination also monitoring and control the proceedings based on complains, signals and/or self-initiative of the Commission.

For example for 2021 there are 629 proceeding (on the ground of sex - 12, race - 2, nationality - 2, ethnicity - 40, human genome - 2, citizenship - 3, origin - 12, religion or belief, - 20 education - 12, belief - 20 political affiliation - 4, personal or social status - 156, disability - 248, age - 32, sexual orientation - 8, sexual harassment – 8, marital status - 12, property status – 17, exercise of trade union activity - 4).

For the period January-September 2022 there are 320 proceedings (on the ground of sex - 10, race - 2, nationality - 2, ethnicity- 17, human genome - 2, citizenship - 7, origin - 3, religion or belief - 5, education - 23, belief - 23, political affiliation - 10, personal or social status- 116, disability - 55, age

- 22, sexual harassment - 3, marital status - 3, property status – 9, exercise of trade union activity – 8)

A type of awareness-raising campaign is the procedure of announcement, applications of the candidates, selection of national and local institutions, business and non-profit organizations, public organizations and institutions and award event for the **Label of major accomplishments in the effective implementation of the gender equality policy**, which is annual initiative of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy. The main purpose of this label is to encourage the efforts of more and more institutions/organizations, as well as the competition between them in the implementation of policies and good practices in the field of equality between women and men.

A Handbook “The Boys and the professions, related with care giving” for teachers and career consultant for work with boys and for gender sensitive career orientation as part of the European project BOYS IN CARE - Encouraging of the boys to choose care-related professions. The aim is to provide professionals who work with boys, information on how to support their choice of education and profession, usually associated with providing or providing care - to children, to people of the third age or to people in a difficult health or social situation, such as social work, social and health care, services in the period of early childhood development, elementary pedagogy, etc. Under the focus of the Handbook is on building the capacity of career guidance professionals to develop gender sensitivity in their work. This is necessary because such professions are often considered more suitable for women than for men, due to existing stereotypes in society about the gender division of professions and the spheres of activity of women and men.

With regard to those seeking international protection, the State Agency for Refugees under the Council of Ministers implements measures in this area that aim to ensure their adaptation and prevent any form of exploitation, abuse, violence or discrimination. Identification of the special needs of asylum seekers begins at the earliest possible stage, allowing for immediate action to refer to specialist care and services. The assessment of the risk of violence is carried out by the officials in the process of registration, accommodation, medical examination, conducting a social interview and during the procedure for granting international protection.

In the territorial structures of the international organization for migration, have been placed brochures on human trafficking and voluntary return, which have been translated into various languages - Pashto, Dari, Arabic, Farsi and English There are screens showing films with information on the prevention of human trafficking on the following topics: Human trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation; Human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation; Protection of unaccompanied children, victims of human trafficking and General information on the problems of human trafficking and the protection provided by official institutions.

The films are provided by the National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking and are bundled with other information materials and aim to inform and prevent cases of trafficking. The Standard Operating Procedures for Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence have been updated. The procedures provide a clear notification and guidance system to inform survivors or witnesses how to respond. The procedure for experienced violence by applicants for international protection is included in the Standard Operating Procedures for Prevention and Response to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence. A number of projects have been implemented against gender-based violence against women and children, asylum seekers and migrants – “Mission Wings” (Misia Krile), supported by UNICEF - Bulgaria and funded by the US Department of State, "SAVE - Speak out against violence" - phase 3, implemented by the Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria, financed by UNICEF and others.

Regarding those seeking protection from the war in Ukraine, registration for residence as beneficiaries of temporary protection, migration authorities refer displaced persons from Ukraine to Public Employment Services (PES).

During the first three months, a mobile team of the territorial divisions of the PES is at the border points with Romania and along the sea border every day, and afterwards, the teams periodically visit border points. In addition, the mobile teams visit transport nodes and crisis headquarters for the arrival of Ukrainian citizens (Sofia, Plovdiv, Gabrovo, Burgas, Varna, Lovech, Targovishte, Silistra, etc.).

The mobile teams (106) to the labour offices visit every place where there are groups of settled Ukrainians, provide information about PES services, and conduct surveys. The representatives of the labour offices are in constant contact with the local authorities and participate in the work of the headquarters at the local level.

The Bulgarian Government has launched a unified information portal named "Bulgaria for Ukraine" to help people fleeing Ukraine. The portal is the first of its kind in the European Union and contains key information about the rights with regard to crossing the border into an EU country, eligibility for temporary protection and applying for international protection.

The site to visit is <https://gov.bg/bg/ukraine> (translated into Ukrainian, English and Russian):
a section on the website "Job opportunities for Ukrainian citizens", containing information on access to the labour market; conditions and life in Bulgaria;
links to a survey for employers willing to hire Ukrainian citizens and a survey on the attitudes of Ukrainians to work in Bulgaria;
publication of weekly information on the results of surveys conducted among Ukrainian citizens and employers;
"Business cards" of the surveys for Ukrainians and employers with links to the two surveys for employers and Ukrainians and "business cards" with a QR code for direct access to the surveys via mobile devices;
Provision of generated QR codes for easy and quick access to surveys via mobile devices;
The National hotline of Bulgaria for Ukraine is staffed in 3 languages by a team of over 20 people.

Foremost among the challenges is the language barrier, which hampers the Ukrainian citizens from freely communication and thus finding a job. Many of the Ukrainian citizens have arrived without documents for acquired education and professional qualifications thus it is difficult for them to occupy jobs with certain requirements. They are predominantly women who are engaged in caring for children and/or elderly relatives.

In this regard, the overall needs of these citizens are as follow: training in the Bulgarian language, services for raising/education of children and for support for the elderly and sick relatives, the possibility of recognition of acquired qualifications and education. Psychological support is needed for some citizens of Ukraine as well as training for the acquisition of a vocational qualification, which should be tailored to the demand of the Bulgarian labour market and in the specific region where the person is located.

After amendments to the Employment Promotion Act the Ukrainian citizens, benefiting from temporary protection, acquired the rights of Bulgarian jobseekers and thus can use the public employment services provided by the labour offices, as well as to participate in programmes and measures for employment and training.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The Council for electronic media (CEM) conducted a focused monitoring on the topic of equality between of women and men. For example in 2021 CEM reported for the predominance of men over women during the three election`s campaign. The data from the participation of men and women in radio and TV programmes show domination of the men against the women.

In connection with the four election campaigns held in the last year - three times for parliament and once for the head of state, the Council for Electronic Media published a Report of the Monitoring of Audio and Audio-visual Content in an election campaign for parliament from the perspective of participation of women and men <https://www.cem.bg/controlbg/1371>.

The monitoring of elections "two in one" - elections for president and vice president and extraordinary elections for parliament once again found that the participation of men in pre-election content quantitatively exceeds the participation of women. According to the publicly announced candidacies for president and vice president (23 couples), there are 191 male candidates for head of state and 4 female candidates. There are 9 male and 14 female candidates for vice president. According to CEC data for the parliamentary vote, out of a total of 5 068 87 candidates for people's representatives (6,306 candidates as one person can be registered in two lists), there are 1 515 female candidates (1 882 total candidates in both lists) against 3 553 male candidates (4 424 total applications in two lists). <https://www.cem.bg/controlbg/1402>

It can be concluded that the achievement of equality between women and men in the legislation still requires work and remains an important goal for the democratic Bulgarian society.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Having regard to the judgment of the Constitutional Court delivered on 27 July 2018, by which the Court ruled that the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, opened for signature on 11 May 2011 in Istanbul, signed from the Republic of Bulgaria on 21.04.2016, does not comply with the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria, our country is not able to ratify this international act, as well as to accede to any part of it.

In 2013, by a decision of the Council of Ministers in Bulgaria, a National Human Rights Co-ordination Mechanism was established, as a result of the need to take concrete steps towards improving co-ordination between state authorities and independent institutions dealing with various aspects of human rights . The main priority areas in its activity are aimed at distributing among the state bodies and institutions the fulfilment of the obligations related to the permanent dialogue and periodic national reports to the international human rights control and monitoring mechanisms; discussion of the expediency of the Republic of Bulgaria's accession to international treaties in the field of human rights; proposing the initiation of legislative changes in the field of human rights, as well as proposing measures to improve the human rights situation in the country.

2.2 Policy changes

The institutional mechanism for the equality of women and men regulated in the Law on equality between women and men. It creates a normative framework for conducting state policy in this area. Its main goal is to promote the achievement of equality between women and men by creating conditions for building a sustainable institutional environment, defining the bodies and working mechanisms for implementing the state policy on equality between women and men. One of the principles on which the state policy on the equality of women and men based is the equal treatment of women and men and the non-admission of discrimination and violence based on gender. This principle is also reflected in the current National Strategy for promoting the equality of women and men for the period 2021-2030 (adopted by the Council of Ministers with Decision 969 of December 30, 2020), in which one of the five priority areas is indicated "Combating violence and protecting and supporting victims". Since 2005, the Strategy has been implemented through annual National Action Plans for promotion of equality between women and men, which are adopted by the Council of Ministers and contain specific measures proposed according to the priorities of the Strategy by the relevant competent institutions and organizations, responsible bodies, financial means and indicators for execution. In the current Action Plan for promotion of equality of women and men 2021-2022 a number of measures are included in priority area 4: Combating violence and protection and support of the victims.

The National Programme for the Prevention and Protection of Domestic Violence for 2022, adopted by Decision 321 of the Council of Ministers of 20 of May 2022, also provides specific measures and legislative changes aimed at increasing public awareness and sensitivity to domestic violence issues , creating a mechanism for the protection of victims of domestic violence and improving co-ordination and interaction between the various state authorities and the organizations involved in the problem.

At the beginning of the current year 2022, a working group was formed to update and finalise the project of the amendment act of the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act. In intensive meetings, the wide range of experts participating in the working group reached an agreement on the key controversial topics raised within the framework of the public discussion of the draft act in 2021, as a result of which a draft of amendments act to the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act was prepared violence, which was the subject of a conciliation procedure. The main reason for the adoption of the draft Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence is the extreme aggravation of domestic violence in the last few years and an increase in the number of victims and victims, which makes the problem a priority.

The aggravation of domestic violence, especially in the conditions of the pandemic, puts the question of solving it in a priority place. According to the exported statistics after the announcement of the global pandemic in all countries, incl. and in Bulgaria, there is an escalation of violence and, in particular, an escalation of violence against women. There are no official statistics in Bulgaria, but according to the latest data from the Ministry of the Interior, there has been an increase in the number of reports of domestic violence registered and recorded on the Single European Emergency Call Number (EEN 112). According to data from the national hotline for victims of violence (0800 1 8676 or 02/981 76 86), provided by the "Animus Association" Foundation, over the last three years there has been a high growth in the number of people seeking help and counselling due to domestic violence and on this line . The comparative analysis of the Ministry of the Interior shows that there is also an increase in the total number of protection orders issued, considering that in most cases one protection order protects the rights of two, three or more persons. The number of immediate protection orders issued also increased, as did the number of injured men. The high growth of cases with injured women is similar.

According to Article 6, paragraph 7 of the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act (PADVA), annually the budget of the Ministry of Justice determines funds for financing projects of non-profit

legal entities that carry out activities under this law, for development and implementation of programmes for prevention and protection from domestic violence.

2.3 Institutional changes

In the Ministry of Interior was appointed a national co-ordinator for domestic and gender-based violence. His deputies and the regional co-ordinators were appointed in the regional directorates of the Ministry of Interior to support the activities of Mol employees.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2022, the Ministry of Justice assigned the implementation of a sociological survey of attitudes towards domestic violence and the Domestic Violence Protection Act. From the research was established that the domestic violence is recognised as a topic of high public importance. Every 9 out of 10 share that domestic violence is a serious public problem. One third of the respondents declare that they are familiar with cases of domestic violence in their immediate social circle. While expectedly residents of Sofia and big cities are more sensitive on the subject, significantly more survey participants from villages declare that they are familiar with cases of domestic violence in their social circle. The survey found that there is a high level of public engagement with the topic of domestic violence and the need for measures against this social phenomenon. The experience with domestic violence and the attitudes towards the subject are relatively equally represented among the different age groups, with the highest share according to the first indicator being among the people on 50-59 year of age. Although fewer women share about cases of domestic violence, their higher degree of commitment to the problem is evident. It is important to note that the same conclusion applies to almost 90% of the men in the study. The majority of the surveyed citizens (95%) believe that protection from domestic violence should be available to all persons, including minors and people with disabilities. According to the study, the fear of abuse of the law in the conflicts between spouses/partners in possible family conflicts is the first risk area. Nearly 60% of the people surveyed share critical attitudes towards the current Protection Against Domestic Violence Act and believe that the national legal framework does not fulfil its main functions for the protection and prevention of victims and persons at risk.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

The legislation in force in Bulgaria guarantees equal opportunities and prohibits discrimination. The principles of non-discrimination in the country are enshrined at the highest possible legislative level – **in the Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria**, according to which all people are born free and equal in dignity and rights and no restrictions of rights or privileges based on a number of signs, including sex, personal and social status, are allowed. Protection against all forms of discrimination is guaranteed by a special Protection against Discrimination Act, ensuring equality before the law, equality of treatment and opportunities for participation in public life and effective protection against discrimination. This act sets out the prohibition of any direct or indirect discrimination based on sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, human genome, citizenship, origin, religion or belief, education, belief, political affiliation, personal or social status, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, property status or any other grounds established by law or in an international treaty, to which the Republic of Bulgaria is a party.

In accordance with the anti-discrimination provisions of the Constitution are also the provisions of the Labour Code, according to which no direct or indirect discrimination based on sex and other grounds, including sexual orientation, marital and material status, mental or physical disability, is allowed in the exercise of labour rights and obligations. Under the Labour Code, women and men are entitled to equal pay for equal or equivalent work. Anti-discrimination provisions related to sex and marital status are contained in a number of other regulations, such as **the Family Code, Employment Promotion Act, the Social Assistance Act** and others. **The Social Security Code**

introduces the principles of compulsory and universal insurance and equal treatment of insured persons.

According to Article 9 of LPD the burden of proof is reversed "in proceedings for protection against discrimination after the party alleging discrimination present facts on the basis of which it can be assumed that there is discrimination, the respondent must prove that the principle of equal treatment has not been breached ". Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) created pursuant to LPD is an independent government body to prevent discrimination, protect against discrimination and ensure equality of opportunities. Proceedings before the commission are initiated on: a complaint of the persons concerned, an initiative of the commission and signals from individuals and legal entities, state and municipal bodies. No fees are charged for proceedings before the CPD. In fulfilment of the obligation to provide independent legal assistance to victims of discrimination when filing complaints about discrimination (Article 47, item 9 of the Law on Protection from Discrimination) at the CPD reception room and by phone consult citizens.

In the Republic of Bulgaria all persons have equal access to justice. For the convenience of the citizens in the National Legal Aid Bureau there is a legally regulated national legal aid telephone number 070018250 for the whole country. The National Legal Aid Telephone is a hotline where every citizen can get free legal advice. Legal advice is provided free of charge by telephone from lawyers selected through a competition.

With regard to victims of domestic violence or victims of crimes based on sex, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, etc., our national legislation guarantees access to justice by providing free counseling and legal aid in connection with the preparation of complaints, signals, preparation of claims, filing of cases and procedural representation before the bodies of the pre-trial proceedings and the court. In the regional counseling centers, where the initial legal assistance is provided to these persons, if necessary, the victims are referred to forensic doctors, doctors, psychologists, Crisis centers providing social services, etc. Victims of domestic violence are exempt from payment of state fees for instituting protection cases under the Protection Against Domestic Violence Act. The right to protection in the pre-trial and court proceedings of the victims of crimes is guaranteed, who do not have the opportunity to hire a contract lawyer and explicitly state that they wish to have one. In these cases, the bodies of investigation and the court submit a request to the respective Bar Council, in the area of which the act for appointment of an official lawyer, registered in the National Register for Legal Aid at the NLAB, was committed.

The CPD provides free consultations when submitting complaints and signals in the reception of the CPD, as well as in the offices of its regional representatives for all citizens on the territory of the country

3.3 Institutional changes

The Commission for Protection against Discrimination is a body with competence to control the application and observance of the laws regulating equality in treatment, exercising control over the application and observance of the Protection against Discrimination Act and other laws regulating equality in treatment. It is an active state body for prevention, control and protection against discrimination. In recent years, the number of complaints and signals from citizens, legal entities, state and local authorities and government, as well as non-governmental organizations has increased. It means that there is a sensitivity trend. More and more citizens are seeking protection of their violated rights before the CPD.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

The Commission for Protection against Discrimination (CPD) has regional representatives, which makes it unique in Europe. They have an obligation to provide independent legal assistance to citizens, to advise and inform them of the implementation of the Law on Protection against Discrimination, of the powers and rules of proceedings before the Commission, on the possibilities to protect the violation of the right to equal treatment, including for their procedural powers in the proceedings before the CPD

The Commission for Protection against Discrimination has organised a number of seminars in recent years. The main purpose of the training is to consider the specifics of discrimination and to take it into account when considering cases.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

According to the provisions of the Act on Equality between Women and Men, one of the principles of the state policy on equality between women and men is the balanced representation of women and men in all decision-making bodies, and overcoming based by sex stereotypes.

The Protection against Discrimination Act (Article 41) imposes requirements on the nine-member composition of the CPD, indicating that in the process of electing or appointing members of the Commission the principles of balanced inclusion of women and men and inclusion of persons from ethnic minorities should be respected.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

In the EIGE Gender Equality Index 2021 Bulgaria is on 9th place in the EU in the domain of "Power".

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

In accordance with the requirements of the Law on asylum and refugees (LAR), every foreigner for whom the conditions and prerequisite provided by law are present has access to the procedure for granting protection on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. The principle of non-discrimination on grounds of sex in proceedings for granting of international protection is derived from the general rule of Article 20 of LAR, according to which no restrictions shall be allowed with respect to the rights or privileges of foreigners seeking or granted protection in the Republic of Bulgaria, based on race, nationality, ethnic origin, sex, descent, religion, education, convictions, political affiliation, personal and social status or property status.

According to the Qualification Directive (Directive 2011/95/EC), transposed into our national legislation with the amendments to LAR, promulgated in SG, issue 80 of 2015, the aspects related to sex, are duly taken into account for the determination of belonging to a social group or the establishment of a characteristic of such a group. With the transposition of the Qualification Directive, the definition of "persons from a vulnerable group" introduced in paragraph 1 item 17 of the Additional Provisions of LAR was introduced, namely in this category fall minors or underage persons, unaccompanied minors and underage persons, elderly people, pregnant women, single parents with underage children, victims of trafficking in human beings, persons with serious health problems, persons with mental disorders, and persons who are victims of torture, rape or other serious forms of mental, physical or sexual violence.

For full harmonization with the European legislation and standards, legal and organizational measures have been taken and implemented for optimization of the national system for granting international protection. Amendments to LAR have been introduced to upgrade and supplement the procedural guarantees for one of the most vulnerable groups - unaccompanied minors. Practical legal provisions and mechanisms are in place to increase the quality of the proceedings for granting international protection. Provisions of Article 25 supplement procedural guarantees in accordance with the principle of child's best interest, provided in Article 25 of the Procedural Directive (Directive 2013/32/EU) and respond to the European Commission's Recommendations for further development of provisions concerning the representation of this vulnerable group. According to LAR, the function of representatives of unaccompanied children - candidates for international protection is assigned to lawyers from the Register for Legal Aid of the National Office for Legal Assistance with the Ministry of Justice. In this way greater speed and efficiency in the appointment of a representative is achieved. There is no need for carrying out additional actions and procedures for providing legal aid and the required standard for the necessary knowledge and skills to perform this function is provided. The obligations of the representative are regulated, requiring the necessary knowledge to assist the child in the procedure of granting international protection, including informing the child about the meaning and possible consequences of the personal interview and, if necessary, how to prepare for it. It is regulated that a representative cannot be a person whose interests are in conflict or could possibly be in conflict with the interests of the unaccompanied child.

With the changes introduced in Article 30a of LAR, a working mechanism for identification and assessment of the needs of persons from vulnerable groups has been established. According to Article 30a (1) of LAR, when the affiliation of a foreigner seeking international protection to a vulnerable group or with special needs is established, the needs are identified and assessed, and if necessary a Support Plan is prepared. This mechanism ensures that the decision-making authority has at its disposal all relevant information on the identified vulnerabilities, special procedural needs and opportunities to provide support. The documents prepared in this procedure are attached to the personal file of the foreigner and ensure that during the entire procedure for granting international protection the special procedural needs of the applicant for international protection be taken into account, that he will be able to exercise his legal right and to perform his duties. The proceedings for granting of international protection for persons from vulnerable group is carried out by employees who have undergone additional training and qualification with focus on the specifics of interviewing this category of persons, in particular the importance of the principle of child's best interest. This presupposes peculiarities during the hearing and observance of the right to an opinion, as well as use of appropriate methods of communication according to the age, sex, culture and maturity of the person.

According to Article 3 of the Protection against Discrimination Act, all natural persons on the territory of the country have the right to protection.

According to Article 3, paragraph 2 Associations of natural persons, as well as legal entities, enjoy the rights under this law when they are discriminated based on the grounds under Article 4, paragraph 1, in respect of their membership or of the persons employed in them.

5.4 Research and awareness raising.

Ministry of Interior is carrying out prevention and information activities to prevent trafficking in human beings - women and men, girls and boys, including activities aimed at "vulnerability of citizens" from "third countries", refugees and asylum seekers.

The priority areas of SAR's activity aimed at improving the awareness of asylum seekers in order to prevent violations of fundamental human rights.

Specially developed brochures on human trafficking and voluntary return to the country of origin have been placed in the reception areas of SAR.

SAR present dally on screens four films with information on the following topics: trafficking in human beings for the purpose of labour exploitation, in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation, protection of unaccompanied children, victims of trafficking and general information on human trafficking and the protection provided by official institutions. The films help to raise awareness about possible abuse and serve as a preventive measure against sexual and labour exploitation.

The CPD does not provide legal aid, but complaints and signals can be submitted to the central office and to the regional representations, and it should be noted that the proceedings are free of charge. Independent assistance is also provided in the preparation of the initiative document.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

SAR creates the necessary conditions for achieving equality between women and men in conducting different activities and in the provision of care and services for foreigners accommodated in the territorial units of the agency according to their specific needs. Equal access to health, social and psychological care provided.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Integration of the principle of equal treatment of women and men in legislation and in all national, regional and local policies, strategies, programmes and plans is enshrined in the Act on Equality between Women and Men as the main approach in the implementation of the state policy on equality between women and men.

6.2 Policy changes

The Council of Ministers defines the state policy on equality between women and men. The Minister of Labour and Social Policy directs, co-ordinates and controls the implementation of the state policy on equality of women and men. In the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy there is a specialised unit – the Department on Equal Opportunities, Anti-Discrimination and Social Assistance Benefits (**EOASAB**), responsible for organizing and co-ordinating policy, involved in the development and analysis of the implementation of national action plans in fostering equality between women and men and other documents. Participates in committees, working groups and programmes in the field of equality between women and men and anti-discrimination at European and national level. The Department is also a Secretariat of the National Council on Equality between Women and Men at Council of Ministers. In carrying out its duties, the Department maintains relations with other public authorities, as well as with other research institutions and non-governmental organizations active in this field.

The EOASAB Department works in close co-operation with officials of central and territorial executive bodies, designated as co-ordinators on equality between women and men.

Representatives of the competent institutions are involved in the institutional mechanism for equality between women and men, consisting of the National Council on Equality between Women and Men and the co-ordinators on equality between women and men.

6.3 Institutional changes

The Act on Equality between Women and Men also regulates the working institutional mechanism, which includes the National Council on Equality between Women and Men at the Council of Ministers and the co-ordinators of equality between women and men.

The designated co-ordinators co-operate with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, as those their functional responsibilities are defined in their job descriptions or by order issued by the hiring state authority. To date, there are persons designated by the central executive bodies and all 28 regional administrations as co-ordinators for equality between women and men.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

The Department on Equal Opportunities, Anti-Discrimination and Social Assistance Benefits, part of the structure of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy organise and conduct training for the national and local co-ordinators of equality between women and men.

Croatia

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

Expert Committees for the Assessment of Textbooks and Other Educational Materials (Official Gazette, No. 9/2019), emphasised a) the obligation to promote gender equality in textbooks in an appropriate manner using the equal proportion of illustrations of characters of both sexes and using nouns of both genders, especially in the naming of professions and occupations so that graphic and textual depictions of the male gender would not prevail in textbooks, b) that women most often appeared in stereotypical roles and occupations, c) and topics of gender equality and women's reproductive rights were dealt with sporadically. In the process of approving new textbooks for the school year 2022/2023 which was carried out in the reporting period, the Ministry of Science and Education did not receive any complaint from members of the expert commissions regarding gender equality.

1.3 Institutional changes

The Ministry of Labour, Family Pension and Social Policy has established an inter-ministerial working group to draft a National Plan for Combating Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, for the period from 2022 to 2027.

The goal of the new National Plan is to unite all segments of this problem and all key steps in combating sexual violence and sexual harassment.

The key areas of intervention that will be covered by the National Plan are:

- Development of prevention
- Education of professionals who work with victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Protection and support for victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment
- Working with perpetrators of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Regarding reduction of vulnerability of persons belonging to Roma communities, Croatia is constantly implementing both mainstream and targeted relevant activities, with particular attention to children, youth and Roma women. In March 2019, the Government Office for Human Rights and the Rights of National Minorities (hereinafter: GOHRRNM) launched a three-year project entitled „Roma Inclusion - Fulfilling Preconditions for Successful Implementation of National Minority Policies - PHASE I" co-funded under the European Social Fund. Throughout the implementation of this project, that is still ongoing, the specific objectives of awareness raising about the importance of education and the position of women, children and young Roma will be achieved.

Activities that aim to encourage young Roma women to engage in education and other areas of life, and to break down stereotypes and prejudices about Roma women among the majority population are: a) a publication entitled "Roma Inclusion in the Croatian Society: Women, Youth and Children" was published and translated into English, b) a short documentary about successful Roma women „One's own" was filmed and broadcasted on national television and Human Rights Film Festival. The movie tells the stories of three young Roma women, who despite lack of support within the Roma community and wider society, followed their own path and achieved different goals. In addition to these, the GOHRRNM organised the video exhibition entitled "My Day" about the lives of Roma children and youth.

Four projects have been carried out by the Ministry of interior during the 2022:

- a) "Together against hate speech", which aims to promote a culture of tolerance and non-violence and the prevention of all forms of hate speech as a socially unacceptable form of behaviour. During 2022, 5 public events and more than 150 preventive and educational

lectures were held as part of the project, during which more than 10,200 people were included, educated and informed.

- b) "Be tolerant", 2 videos, in which educational messages about the importance of tolerance, mutual respect, cultural diversity and dialogue, and the prevention of hate speech are conveyed to primary and secondary school students through influencers, and a test with which students and adults can check how tolerant they are.
- c) "I have a choice", is thematically focused on strengthening the social inclusion of minority social groups in the community.
- d) "A Day as a Dream" stated project aims to reduce the probability that elderly people or people with disabilities, especially women with disabilities, will become victims of criminal acts and increase their subjective sense of security in order to improve their quality of life.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

During the reporting period the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality and the Director of the Governmental Office for Gender Equality reacted in many cases related to sexism in different media content, sexism in language, offensive and humiliating portrayal of persons based on sexual orientation with its warnings and recommendations. An example that may be highlighted is the case in which an elementary school arranged male and female sections for home economics lessons and thus promoted a highly stereotyped division of duties and gender related characteristics of boys and girls. The Ombudsperson gave a warning and recommendations to the school (<https://prs.hr/cms/post/689>). At the same time the case attracted significant negative public reaction and the school removed the problematic display.

In June 2021, the project "Voice of Women in Sport" was jointly organised by the Croatian Olympic Committee, the Agency for Electronic Media, the Office for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, the Ombudsperson for Gender Equality and the Croatian Paralympic Committee, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Media and the Ministry of Tourism and Sport. The project resumed in 2022. In co-operation with other active members of the Gender and the Media Task Force, a *new analysis of the visibility of women's sports in the media* was carried out in 2022 on a much larger sample. The results of the analysis will be published in October 2022.

Through co-operation with non-governmental organisation B.a.B.e., the Women and the Media Task Force, established under auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Media, put a special emphasis on online violence against women in 2021/22. In May 2021, as a partner of the project with B.a.B.e., the Agency for Electronic Media concluded a Partnership Agreement on the project "*SURF and SOUND – Support, Unite, Respond, Fight to Stop Online Violence*". As a part of the project, the national awareness-raising campaign has been launched by the Agency in 2022. It included a video broadcast on national television and a billboard campaign in the five largest cities in the Republic of Croatia. During March, April and May 2022, several workshops were held for media professionals aimed at raising awareness about online violence, the importance of respecting victims and avoiding secondary victimisation in reporting.

The Police Academy, as the only educational institution in the Republic of Croatia in charge of education of police officers at all levels (basic education, college education and lifelong education), pays attention to ensuring equal rights to compete / apply for education and participation in education for men and women. When announcing competitions or invitations to participate in certain forms of education, a gender sensitive language is used, and education contest or invitation is intended equally for women and men both in the police system and outside of it.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The Ministry of Justice and Public Administration implemented a reform of the criminal procedure, in terms of expanding the use of information and communication technologies in the criminal procedure, namely by introducing e-communication, expanding the use of audio recording to all hearings in the criminal procedure and expanding the possibility of using an audio-video link - that changes would also advance procedures related to gender-based violence. These legislative changes entered into force on 19 July 2022. The aim of the amendments of the Criminal Procedure Act was to shorten the duration of court proceedings, increase the efficiency of criminal proceedings through easier communication with the court and monitoring of its course of proceedings, and strengthen the protection of participants in all phases of criminal proceedings.

2.2 Policy changes

At the end of 2020, 6 new shelters for victims of domestic violence were established, and now a total of 25 shelters for victims of violence operate in the Republic of Croatia throughout the Republic of Croatia. Shelters receive financial support from the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, cities, and counties, and from EU funds. Every year a tender is held for projects of civil society organisations in the field of prevention and suppression of various forms of domestic violence within the work of counselling. Selected high-quality projects receive financial support from the Ministry.

In 2022 the Office for Gender Equality established the Working Group for the development of a new Protocol on rules of procedure in cases of sexual violence. It is composed of representatives of state administration bodies and NGOs. The intention of the Protocol is to standardise all procedures in order to ensure the uniform practice of all competent bodies and institutions in the Republic of Croatia with the aim of providing quality and effective protection and support for the victims. The Protocol will be operational and practical as possible, with incorporation of all necessary legislation, such as provisions related to sexual harassment in the workplace.

2.3 Institutional changes

In 2022, the fifth meeting of the working group of the *Monitoring Body for comprehensive monitoring, data collection, analysis and reporting on cases of murder of women - Femicide Watch* was held. As of 27 June 2022, the Ombudsperson recorded a total of 10 murders of women, which has already reached more than two thirds of all murders of women in 2021. In 60% of this year's cases, the victims are mothers, and the perpetrators are sons, and this is a multi-year trend that should be sociologically researched. At the meeting, the definition of femicide as proposed by the UN in the report *Statistical framework for measuring the gender-related killing of women and girls* (also referred to as "femicide/feminicide") was presented, and it was agreed to monitor all murders of women through three categories, namely according to the sex of the perpetrator: 1. women killed by current or former intimate partners; 2. women killed by other family members; and 3. other murders of women. The participants of the meeting agreed on the importance of monitoring the triggers or risks for femicide, such as leaving a violent partner, alcoholism, threats of (suicide) which should be determined during the individual assessment of the victim and protective measures proposed accordingly.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

The Ministry of Labour, Pensions, Family and Social Policy has been implementing in the 2022 the EU project entitled "Stop Violence against Women and Domestic Violence - There is No Justification for Violence". As part of this project, a National Media Campaign with the slogan *#empathynow* has been carried out. The purpose of a media campaign is: a) Rising public awareness of the harmfulness and unacceptability of violence against women and domestic violence, b) Emphasising the importance of preventing violence against women and domestic violence, c) Promotion of the

service of the National 24-hour telephone line 116 006 as part of the system of prevention from violence and protection of victims of violence. The Campaign has been divided into two phases. The first phase of the campaign is based on raising awareness about violence with the aim of creating a social environment in which the victim of violence actively seeks help, perpetrators accept responsibility, and witnesses report violence. It is focused on the key message "A fate you would not wish on your daughter". As part of the violence prevention and victim protection system the second phase of the Campaign includes the promotion of the free 24-hour telephone line 116 006. During 2022, campaign activities will continue through the organisation of public events as well as communication materials. During September 2022, on marking the National Day of Combating Violence Against Women, a public event called *Art špica* will be organised - creating a mural in collaboration with children who are users of the Home for Education.

In 2021, The Office for Gender Equality marked November 25 - the International Day of Combating Violence against Women by organizing a round table entitled "Let's prevent violence against women with disabilities!" in co-operation with the Community of Associations of Persons with Disabilities. The gathering was attended by numerous people with disabilities, representatives of associations that promote the rights of people with disabilities, representatives of state administration bodies and the ombudsman's office for people with disabilities. The aim of the round table would be to fulfil the Office's obligation defined by the new National and Action Plan for Equalizing Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities for the period from 2021 to 2027.

The Office for Gender Equality co-financed the holding of workshops for women with disabilities from all over the Republic of Croatia with the aim of educating them about combating gender-based violence and the importance of the Istanbul Convention. The workshops were organised in July 2022 by the Community of Associations of Persons with Disabilities and lasted seven days.

The Ministry of Interior continued implementing several projects related to rising awareness about gender-based violence: (a) Living life without violence, and (b) Lily.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

Within the framework of the project "Stop Violence against Women and Domestic Violence - There is No Justification for Violence", the planning of trainings for all experts who deal with cases of domestic violence and experts of associations that work programmatically in the field of violence continued. The new cycle was held on 13 and 14 June 2022, on the topic of gender-based violence. Educations are conducted by representatives of the civil sector.

During 2022, various institutions created or improved their internal acts with the aim of suppressing sexual harassment in the workplace and in the educational system. The Ombudsperson for Gender Equality provided professional support to numerous institutions in these efforts.

The General Police Directorate has passed on to all Police Districts instructions with guidelines how police offers should deal in cases of offences with elements of violence involving family members/close relatives (how to deal with the victims, importance on the obligation to assess risk factors from repeated violence, acting in accordance with protection measures, etc).

The Police Academy at various levels of education and through various programmes conducts continuous education of police officers in the field of human rights, especially violence against women and domestic violence.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.5 Other pertinent developments .

From January until May 2022 Ministry of Justice and Administration in accordance with the provisions of the Free Legal Aid Act ("Official Gazette" No. 143/13. & 98/19.) conducted a tender for financing projects of authorised civil-society-associations and law faculties for provision of primary legal aid for 2022. Financial resources were allocated to 23 projects of authorised civil-society-associations and law faculties, and a total of 2.066.654,80 HRK was awarded. The project activities envisage the provision of primary legal aid to vulnerable social groups, such as socially vulnerable persons, persons with disabilities, members of national minorities, victims of violence, victims of domestic violence, and applicants for international protection. Most of the authorised civil-society-associations in their priority area of activity stated the provision of primary legal aid to victims of violence and domestic violence, members of national minorities, while several authorised civil-society-associations in their priority area of activity stated the provision of primary legal aid to applicants for international protection, persons granted international protection - irregular migrants.

With the aim to develop and strengthen support for victims and witnesses of offences, a co-operation agreement has been signed between the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice and Administration and the Victims and Witness Support Service Croatia to implement a pilot project to establish a system of referring the victims to the Support Service Croatia/National Call Centre for Victims of Offences and Misdemeanours 116 006. This pilot project has been carried out since 1 February 2022 with the aim to establish a practice that the victim, with his/her agreement, and after the offense has been reported to the police, should be contacted by the Support Service staff/National Call Centre staff. In relation to this project, the 7th Police Station in Zagreb of the Zagreb Police District and all police stations in the Koprivnica and Križevci Police District were selected as project participants. The results obtained on the basis of activities carried out during the duration of the pilot project will serve as a basis for further strategic planning of the development of the victim referral system in order to provide for a timely assistance to and support of the victims.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.5 Other pertinent developments

The Ombudsperson for Gender Equality gave a public statement regarding the frequent occurrence of sexist speech in the Croatian Parliament and addressed the President of the Croatian Parliament to take appropriate actions to ensure the absence of sexist speech in the Croatian Parliament and to ensure adequate reaction to sexism speech from MP's, all in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia and the Rules of Procedure of the Croatian Parliament.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.3 Institutional changes

The Interdepartmental Working Group for the Implementation of the Activities of Accepting Refugees from Ukraine has been established by the Government of the Republic of Croatia on 28 February 2022. Its competence is the co-ordinate action of all competent bodies and institutions and the implementation of measures and activities for the provision of humanitarian aid, the reception and care of the population from Ukraine, and its work will be co-ordinated by the MUP, which will also perform professional technical and administrative tasks. There have been emphasises the gender structure of refugees, which consists of approximately 46% women, 44% children and up to 13% men.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2021, Office for Human Rights and Rights of National Minorities conducted a training entitled *Integration and human rights*, consisting of four modules and aimed at persons who have been granted international protection in the Republic of Croatia, but also for other third-country nationals. The participants were introduced to available mechanisms for human rights protection and suppression of discrimination in the Republic of Croatia, i.e., the competences of bodies in charge of handling cases of human rights violations, including the right to equality. They were also presented with examples of unequal treatment based on various discriminatory grounds, including gender and marital and family status, as well as examples of violations of the right to equal legal protection in the context of gender-based violence.

On 8 December 2021 a round table entitled “Inclusion of refugee women in society - opportunities and challenges” was held within the framework of Human Rights Festival. The purpose of the round table was to discuss key challenges for the socio-economic participation of refugee women and to present examples of good practice in the implementation of projects and activities aimed at empowering refugee women, as well as other migrant women, for equal participation in social flows, especially for the purpose of economic emancipation. Moreover, a qualitative analysis of domestic media content was conducted, including the chapter *Women on the Move: Gender Reporting Dimension*, which deals with the gender dimension in portraying migrants, especially refugees, in the media. Publication in Croatian is available online and it will also be translated into English.

With a co-operation of the Ministry of Interior, UNHCR and IOM Office, the Governmental Office for Gender Equality started an initiative to draft a leaflet on gender-based violence for migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women on eight different languages in 2021. The idea behind the leaflet is to inform this vulnerable group of women who experienced gender-based violence about their rights, services and possibilities to apply for asylum on the basis of gender sensitive interpretation of the 1951 Refugee Convention. The leaflet was printed in 3000 copies in 2021, and in the same amount will be printed in 2022. In 2022, the OGE disseminated

During the reporting period, Centre for Cultural Dialogue (CCD) as the implementing partner of the Ministry of the Interior for this project has been conducting activities related to support the systematic integration of the dimension of gender equality and the economic empowerment and respect of rights of beneficiaries of international protection, in terms of employment, health, housing and education, especially women and children of previously mentioned group: organizing donations in food, school and other types of supplies for the ones who are currently of weaker financial status.

Ministry of the Interior as the Croatian National Contact Point for European Migration Network (EMN) organised a conference “Women in Migration” (AMIF funded), on the occasion of World Refugee Day on 23 June 2022, with the aim to raise awareness about women in migration and their role in integration into the new society, the challenges they face, to present the EU framework and national policies and strategies of Member States in the field of integration of migrant women, to exchange ideas and good practices through the testimonies of migrant women themselves, an active role they should play in policy-making and decision-making processes, in order to enable their more successful and equal inclusion in society.

Regarding educations, Integration Department of Ministry of the Interior participated in online EMN study forum on the topic “Integration of women in migration”, organised by EMN NCP Malta.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

The Maternity and Parental Benefits Act has entered into force in 2022. The Act provides fatherly leave from 10 or 15 day (in cases of multiple births) after the birth of a child with full compensation from the state health insurance. The leave can be used up to 6 months of child's age.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2022, the Croatian Institute of Public Health carried out the following activities:

Within the framework of the health system, with the aim of strengthening the training and education program, the implementation of activities related to education on psychosocial treatment and resocialisation of addicted women continued.

In order to more effectively implement psychosocial treatment and resocialisation, among other things, in relation to women with drug addiction problems, regional workshops on planning, monitoring and evaluation of psychosocial addiction treatment were held in Zagreb from 23 to 27 May 2022. Also, on 13 July 2022, in Split, in co-operation with the League for the Prevention of Addiction, a meeting was held for health, social and prison workers and representatives of associations from the Split-Dalmatia County on the topic of resocialisation and the implementation of psychosocial interventions with a special emphasis on women with addiction problems on drugs, in which representatives of the Croatian Institute of Public Health participated as lecturers.

In May 2022, the Croatian Institute of Public Health and the Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy adopted programme standards for the evaluation/verification of psychosocial rehabilitation and social reintegration programmes implemented in the aforementioned service providers. The aim of these is to strengthen psychosocial programmes, accommodation facilities and define criteria for the establishment of therapeutic communities and other forms of accommodation facilities, among other things, for addicted women with minor children and addicted women who are victims of domestic violence.

The Office for Gender Equality continued the efforts to raise awareness and provide information to general public through digital communication channels about important days regarding gender equality and gender equality projects and policies (information about Safe city application, International Women's day, IDAHOT, National and International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women etc.)

6.5 Other pertinent developments

In the reporting period, Croatia has advocated for the rights of women and girls regularly on all occasions, including in the context of discussions at the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the UN Security Council and ECOSOC sessions.

Besides advocating for women's rights through bilateral relations, during the reporting period through the Ministry of foreign and European affair single out the following activities in multilateral forums:

- during the 49th session of the UN Human Rights Council, Croatia supported the joint statement of Finland and Mexico on International Women's Day;
- within the framework of the EXPO Dubai 2022 exhibition, Croatia joined the French initiative sponsored by the fashion company "Cartier", launched on the occasion of International Women's Day 2022, aimed at strengthening awareness of the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women around the world;

- Croatia supported #Women4Multilateralism initiative, launched by Ms Meglena Kuneva, ambassador of the EU to the Council of Europe, and nominated Ms Kolinda Grabar - Kitarović, the 4th President of the Republic of Croatia, to support this initiative on the behalf of Croatia. The initiative is aimed at strengthening awareness of the importance of multilateralism and the role of women;
- during the 50th session of the UN Human Rights Council, Croatia supported women's rights and the fight against discrimination against women by cosponsoring and joining all relevant resolution and joint statements. We would like to emphasise in particular that Croatia provided support to the last-minute EU delegation's initiative on gender equality, prompted by an extremely large number of hostile amendments to the resolution on discrimination of women and girls and presented at the very end of this Council's session.

In March 2022, Croatia had submitted its candidature for the membership in Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), for the election that was held in June this year. Prior to the election the Ministry of foreign and European affairs had launched an extensive lobbying campaign for the Croatian candidate Ms Dunja Bonacci Skenderović, very experienced independent expert in the area of gender-based violence against women, human trafficking in women, sexual harassment and femicide. For her first candidature, Ms Bonacci Skenderović did not receive enough votes of the member States to be elected to GREVIO. However, during the voting process, Ms Bonacci Skenderović had received significant support of the member States, as a confirmation for her expertise. Croatia attaches great importance to prevention and combating violence against women and domestic violence, and a membership in GREVIO is one of the national priorities.

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes
<p>MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND YOUTH</p> <p>Policy Changes</p> <p>The Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth promotes an antiracist policy, supported by the Pedagogical Institute, which offers teacher training related to antiracist policies and practices in education. Specifically, the Ministry, following a recommendation by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, and in collaboration with the Anti-Discrimination Body, has drafted a “Code of Conduct Against Racism & Guide for Managing and Reporting Racist Incidents” in schools. The Code discusses research and policy and identifies the need for a whole-school antiracist policy, with a broad conceptualisation of racism in all forms, in order to include all sorts of discrimination. It also provides schools and teachers with a detailed plan on how to deal with and prevent racist incidents, which they may adjust to their specific needs before adoption and implementation in school-based settings. It includes definitions of basic concepts (e.g., racism, racist incident, homophobia, transphobia, bullying, discrimination, gender stereotypes, sexism etc.), outlines the responsibilities and commitments expected by each member of the school community and provides the steps needed to be followed by schools for dealing with racist incidents in a practical rubric.</p> <p>Other activities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Ministry of Education focuses on ensuring equal opportunities in education for both genders on a non-discriminatory basis at all levels of education. The Ministry has formed an Interdepartmental Committee with representatives from all the Ministry’s departments and services. This Committee oversees and co-ordinates all gender equality issues related to actions taken by the Ministry.2. There is also a website dedicated to Gender Equality (Pedagogical Institute), which includes useful information, bibliography and teaching material for promoting equal opportunities of both genders and gender mainstreaming in the educational process. The content of the website is frequently updated. http://www.pi.ac.cy/pi/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=910&Itemid=383&lang=en3. The recently revised curricula have developed modern teaching material which will include a gender perspective aimed at combating gender stereotypes from an early age, especially by encouraging boys’ greater involvement in family life and women’s participation in politics/public life and develop relationships based on gender equality and mutual respect between the sexes.4. Implementing programmes in schools with the aim of promoting gender equality and respect among all children in class, irrespective of their background or gender (Educational Psychology Service).5. Training of teachers and parents on issues related to active citizenship, multiculturalism, social inclusion/exclusion, identities and relationships between girls and boys, gender equality awareness through school-based training seminars and programmes (Pedagogical Institute).6. Workshops for teachers (Primary and Secondary Education) organised by the Pedagogical Institute.7. Organising conferences/seminars on gender issues for teachers of all levels by the Pedagogical Institute.8. Workshops for teachers and students aiming at the promotion of equality and inclusion (Career Counselling and Educational Services).

9. Collaboration of the Interdepartmental Committee with the Gender Equality in Employment and Vocational Training Committee and various NGOs.

10. The MOECSY, in collaboration with the Interdepartmental Committee with the Gender Equality in Employment and Vocational Training Committee, is organizing an annual competition for pupils at all levels of education concerning combating gender stereotypes in the field of workplace or their career path.

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE

The Deputy Ministry of Social Welfare has implemented the Childcare Services Grant Scheme on 27/07/2022. The Scheme aims to support families with young children, through the subsidy of Child Care Services for children up to 4 years old, for all eligible families based on income and property criteria. Moreover, this facilitates women with pre-schoolers to enter the job market and promotes equal economic independence for women.

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DIGITAL POLICY

Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF), the national authority in charge of supporting and promoting research, technological development and innovation in Cyprus, had prepared and adopted an internal policy document entitled “RIF Gender Equality Plan 2018-2020”, aiming to tackle gender inequalities and imbalances in Research and Innovation in Cyprus.

The Plan was prepared in the framework of the participation of the organisation in the European funded Project TARGET – Taking a Reflexive Approach to Gender Equality for Institutional Transformation worked in support of the preparation of the policy document.

The Gender Equality Plan has been addressing gender inequality in Research and Innovation in three dimensions (a) Human Resource management, (b) Decision-making, (c) Research content. The Plan also includes a number of specific measures and actions, most of which had already been in place.

GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE IN EMPLOYMENT AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training is currently drafting Guidelines regarding the sexual harassment in the workplace, which are referred to employers and employees in order to be informed of their right to report incidents of sexual harassment within their workplace. This Guide will inform victims of sexual harassment on how to file a complaint and their colleagues on how to prevent and deal with such incidents.

Moreover, the Committee, within the framework of its responsibilities, organises educational seminars, events, actions on issues related to equal treatment in the workplace provide independent assistance to the victims of discrimination when they report a discrimination, without prejudice to the right of the victims, unions, organisations or other legal entities. For 2021, the Commission granted legal aid in two cases, while for 2022, it has so far approved legal aid for one complainant.

Also, since 2021, the Committee assists employers in preparing and adopting a code of conduct and investigates whether such code has been adopted and implemented by the employers and whether the workers have been informed and provides training to employers and workers on matters of their competences.

1.3 Institutional changes

GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE IN EMPLOYMENT AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

According to the article 23(2)(e) of the Equal Treatment Between Men and Women in Employment and Vocational Training Law of 2002, the Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training promotes the carrying-out of studies and research, including the collection of statistical data on any matter falling within the scope of its powers.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

GENDER EQUALITY COMMITTEE IN EMPLOYMENT AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The Gender Equality Committee in Employment and Vocational Training is associate partner at the "ASTRAPI- Active Strategies for prevention and handling of sexual harassment incidents- Project" which concentrate on education, training, finding intervention strategies and instruments for the effective implementation of intervention measures, developing risk assessment instruments, raising awareness, and informing the public about sexual harassment at work, are clearly extremely important tools to prevent and deal with sexual harassment in the workplace.

The Astrapi Project drafted a European Toolkit on ending sexual harassment in the world of work provides guidance and best practices on implementing a transformative, comprehensive and multi-dimensional approach to ending sexual harassment in the world of work. It is intended to raise awareness, inspire action and new ideas, and provide practical tools to prevent and effectively handle incidents of sexual harassment in the world of work. Also, as part of the project, a training handbook has been designed to guide trainers to deliver training workshops on sexual harassment at work taking a transformative approach.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN)

The Commissioner for Administration and Protection of Human Rights (Ombudsman), under her competence as Equality Body, has issued three Reports (dated 5 March 2021, 17 December 2021 and 12 September 2021, regarding unequal treatment of female army non-commissioned Officers in the workplace based on gender. In particular, it was found that these women, during their professional careers, were the victims of direct gender discrimination, due to the legal framework which regulated their access to permanent positions and promotion, in comparison with the male army non-commissioned Officers. The Commissioner is at this stage in consultations with the Ministry of Defence, in respect to the remedial measures that must be taken.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND YOUTH

Legislative Changes

In national laws, general references are made to the responsibility of the Ministry of Education for the provision of information on sexuality education to children and provision of training to educators. Sexuality Education is included in the Health Education curriculum. The topics that are related to sexuality education are mostly included in the thematic unit "Family Planning, Sexual and Reproductive Health". The topics are mostly included in the thematic unit "Family Planning, Sexual and Reproductive Health". The unit includes topics that are related to a holistic understanding of sexual and reproductive health, such as the national and European legal framework, stereotypes, domestic and other forms of violence, risky sexual behaviour, homophobia, the role of religion and media, etc. These topics are approached in relation to the role of peer pressure, life values, gender stereotypes, self-confidence, safety, human rights and responsibilities and substance abuse.

Sexuality education, as included in Health Education, may contribute to the prevention and dealing of social problems such as sexual violence, bullying, unwanted pregnancies in teenagers, homophobia, risky sexual behaviours, HIV/AIDS and other STDs, reproduction of gender stereotypes, violence against women, stigmatisation and discrimination of marginalised groups such as LGBT students etc. Based on the methodological approach of Health Education, sexuality education is approached in a way that no students, from any background, will feel insulted, excluded or uncomfortable during the lesson. On the contrary, each student is empowered through their own cultural and ethical framework in order to acquire the skills and adopt the attitudes, values and behaviours which enhance their resistance to the early initiation of sexual activities and/or involvement in high-risk sexual behaviours.

The learning objectives of sexuality education in the Health Education Curriculum aim to the promotion of critical analysis of the various perspectives on issues of sexuality and not to a moralistic position in favour of against any choice of sexual behaviour. Sexuality education, based on the Health Education Curriculum, does not aim to teach what is 'right' or 'wrong' in relation to family planning and sexual life - always in the context of international, European and national legal framework and of the International Declaration of Human Rights. The learning objectives are based on the health promotion approach and aim to provide opportunities to students in order to critically explore the various social factors, which determine issues of sexuality, and to understand the ways in which society may influence the attitudes, choices and behaviours of a person in relation to sexuality issues.

CYPRUS POLICE

1. The passing and implementation of Law 115(I)/2021 (based on the Convention of Istanbul).
2. The introduction of the term "femicide" in the law 115(I)/2021, on 07/07/22, is an important step towards the fight against violent crimes against women.
3. The enactment and implementation of Law 114(I)/2021 regarding Stalking and Harassment, has further strengthened the legal framework on offences against women.
4. In addition, the national law on the support and protection of victims is the Law 51(I)/2016 ("Law of 2016 on the establishment of minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime"), has been strengthened and improved in order to be better applied in cases of victims of violence, in general and also for victims of domestic violence/violence against women.

2.2 Policy changes

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ORDER

The Minister of Justice and Public Order has recently asked the Police to revise the Protocols that it implements in cases of dealing with victims of sexual violence and rape, in such a way as to fully incorporate the provisions of the Istanbul Convention. The said Protocols should also follow the innovative provisions of the national legislation on gender-based violence, as well as the modernised framework of the Penal Code, which in cases of rape places the lack of consent from the victim as a central reference point.

The new revised Protocols fully adopt and implement a victim-centred approach, through which the victim is treated with respect, sensitivity; an individualised, professional and non-discriminatory approach. This is for all contact with law-enforcement authorities that operate within the penal process, or with support services. The rights of women victims are fully guaranteed under conditions of security, confidentiality and trust. This avoids the danger of secondary and repeated victimisation.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND YOUTH

Policy Changes

1. The Ministry recognising its responsibility and influence in the field of primary prevention, has proceeded to the setting up and operation of a Co-ordinating Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children with representatives of all Ministry's departments and services. The Committee co-ordinates all matters concerning the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation, Sexual Abuse and Child Pornography relating to the actions of the Ministry.

2. The National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography ("NS") constitutes the basic policy text and guides the actions and initiatives of the Authorities of the Republic of Cyprus for the next three years. The elaboration of the NS was decided by the Council of Ministers on 13/7/2015 and for this purpose an Inter-ministerial Committee has been established, comprising the Ministers of Education and Culture, Labour, Welfare and Social Security, Justice and Public Order and Health. The National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography 2016-2019, was seeking to recognise the scope and scale of this social problem, to identify the priorities for addressing it properly and to determine the necessary actions and policies in order to achieve the primary goal which can be described as follows: "All children should have the opportunity to grow up in conditions of security, equipped with all the tools that would allow them to develop healthy relationships, without having to face any form of sexual exploitation or abuse, free from all forms of sexual injury". This Strategy was renewed recently and the new one covers the period 2020-2023.

3. The Ministry has designed and developed the National Strategy for Preventing and addressing School Violence, which has a four-year timeframe of implementation (2018 -2022). According to its role and responsibilities, and based on the aforementioned Strategy, the Cyprus Observatory on School Violence (COSV) of the CPI has developed and implemented actions that aim to prevent and address bullying and violence in schools. COSV provides support to school units for the implementation of actions and programmes aimed at improving the school climate, with the ultimate aim of reducing violence in schools. These programmes, which are school-based and they have a two-year duration, are the "Conflict Resolution - School Mediation" and the "Recognition and Management of School Bullying".

The COSV supports schools in the implementation of anti-bullying programmes, which deal with recognizing, preventing and combating bullying. With the "Conflict Resolution - School Mediation" schools are encouraged to find effective way of resolving student conflicts as well as alternative way of managing conflict situations at school.

Also, educational material to assist teachers on how to undertake activities with children to enhance their competences needed for prevention and management of school violence was produced and disseminated.

The curriculum of this material includes activities to enhance anger management, teambuilding, empathy, emotional intelligence, social and communicative skills, tolerance, acceptance of diversity, mediation skills, anti-bullying skills, conflict management etc.

It must also be noted that, the Ministry of Education in the framework of the implementation of the National Strategy for the Prevention and Management of School Violence, in June 2018, announced an Open Tender for services by a researcher to conduct a long-term research on the phenomenon of school violence.

The responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the Convention was assigned to the Observatory for Violence at School (COSV), within the terms of its mandate.

The project is part of the first section of this National Strategy, which provides for the creation of mechanisms for data collection, coding and analysis and reporting of key outcomes around the phenomenon, extent and forms of violence at school.

The Ministry, through the creation of these mechanisms, seeks to monitor the phenomenon of violence at school, identify needs and evaluate the effectiveness of existing interventions/programmes in order to make research-based decisions and, in general, to formulate effective policy.

This research is the first step in the effort to reduce violence in the Cypriot population and is the first to be addressed to all schools in Cyprus. It will be completed in four (4) school years, from the date of signing the Contract and includes data collection for three (3) consecutive years (2020-2023) from all Public and Private schools in Cyprus, of all levels (Pre-primary, Primary, Secondary General, Secondary technical and Vocational. Moreover, the COSV collects data concerning good practices for the prevention of violence in schools, it evaluates these practices and it organises an annual conference where the best practices are awarded, thus receiving visibility and outreach. Finally, COSV collaborates with other stakeholders involved in preventing and responding to school violence.

Other activities

1. In-service training of teachers on issues related to preventing and combating delinquency (Department of Primary Education, Department of Secondary General Education, Department of Secondary Technical and Vocational Education, the Pedagogical Institute).
2. Workshops for teachers (Primary and Secondary Education) organised by the Pedagogical Institute and the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS).
3. Workshops for teachers (Primary and Secondary Education) organised by the Pedagogical Institute on gender relations topics.
4. Collaboration of the Interdepartmental Committee with various NGOs.

The COSV participates as a partner in the following European project:

- Erasmus+ KA3 project entitled “SAFER: SociAl competences and FundamEntal Rights for preventing bullying (including on-line bullying)” (1/12/20 – 30/11/23). This project aims to experiment the innovative method of “Whole School & Community Approach” in preventing and combating bullying.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The Mental Health Services Directorate continue to provide support and treatment to abusers and victims upon referral, while during the pandemic, where there was an increased likelihood that citizens needed telephone support and relief of their anxiety, we made telephone support lines and online therapeutic meetings available in each province and we provided tele-care services to the citizens, with the participation of all the specialties of our Directorate with the aim of providing psychological support to citizens in the context of tele-care, as well as the services of a Psychiatrist and Child Psychiatrist, in the context of tele-care. For the above actions, relevant announcements and publications were made via electronic media.

2.3 Institutional changes

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ORDER

A National Co-ordinating Body for Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women was established on 3.3.2022, based on a Council of Ministers' Decision. This Body is responsible for co-ordinating, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies and measures aimed at preventing and combating all forms of violence which are covered within the Istanbul Convention. Recently, the National Co-ordinating Body for Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women has undertaken to create a unified, centralised and comprehensive data collection system on all forms of violence against women, disaggregated by sex, age, type of violence as well as the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim, geographical location, as well as other factors, in accordance with the provisions of the Istanbul Convention. Furthermore, the Co-ordinating Body has undertaken to draft the first National Strategy and the first National Action Plan on Preventing and Combating all forms of Violence Against Women.

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE

The Social Welfare Services of the Deputy Ministry of Social Welfare participate in the newly established National Co-ordinating Body for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women (03/03/2022), according to Law No. 115 (I)/2021.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

Awareness raising campaign on the criminalisation of the demand and/or use of sexual services from victims of human trafficking, aiming to tackle demand. The campaign took place in May and June and included a 40" spot, played on TV, cinemas, social and digital media and on the radio, all across Cyprus. The campaign targeted adult men but also the wider public in Cyprus. It informed the public of their criminal liability, based on Law 60(I)/2014, should they demand sexual services from human trafficking victims. It also informed the public of the 4-digit hotline '1497', operated by the Police specifically to receive anonymous information on possible trafficking cases.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

Mental Health Services Directorate, continue to provide support and treatment to perpetrators and victims upon referral, as well as support to women with different sexual orientations and gender identities, female drug users or victims of human trafficking, while psychological support, in addition to the provision of mental health services health care through the outpatient clinics, is also provided to immigrant women through the co-financed project of provision of Mental Health services by Clinical Psychologists with the aim of relieving the guests at the Reception and Hospitality Centre for International Protection Applicants in Kofinou, from mental pain and mental problems.

Nursing Services (NS) Administration of the Ministry of Health (MoH)

Within the context of the indicative actions for the preparation of a National Strategy and National Action Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women 2023-2028, health professionals participated in Educational Seminars given with the subject "Violence against women and femicide". Many health professionals as nurses, nurses-midwives, psychiatric nurses and health visitors, were participated.

Within the context of gender equality and non-discrimination, the NS participated in the establishment of the "Equality Committee" of the MoH that aims to promote the Code of Practice for preventing and handling sexual harassment at the workplace.

The Educational Sector of NS in co-operation with the Midwives Committee of Nurses and Midwives Association in regard to actions for the awareness raising to prevent and combat violence against women or /and pregnant women have included in their next Conference of Professional Midwives the specific thematic supplemented with an interactive workshop.

Mental Health Nurses of Nursing Services: “TARGET” Drug Harm Reduction and Drop –in Centre, is a co-operative programme between the Nursing Services of the Ministry of Health and the Cyprus Anti-Drug Association in the context of Public Health and the broader strategy to support capacity building for volunteering and NGOs, strategy of the Ministry of Health that resides under Good Governance Policy. TARGET is a direct access (Drop-in) and harm reduction programme approved by the National Drug Addiction Authority.

It contributes to a multidimensional field in Drug Addiction ranging from measures to protect vulnerable populations with difficulties in accessing health services to measures of general public health benefit to society as a whole. By direct access we mean a free access centre or services that anyone can access for free, without any pre-arranged appointments and registration procedures, which do not qualify for the reception and service of users. By harm reduction we mean a set of measures and interventions with main purpose to reduce the abuse of substances linked to personal and social harm.

Actions for awareness raising and support to help Prevent and combat violence for women drug users in vulnerable situations are taken into high consideration at the Centre. This actions/interventions are specific to a vulnerable and marginalised target group of women (Mental Health /Addiction /Dual Diagnosis). It includes interventions provided in the Centre, street work and the “Care Zone” mobile unit, a referral system with the Association for the prevention and handling of violence in the Family SPAVO is activated when needed.

CYPRUS POLICE

- The Police (Safeguarding Sub-Directorate) inform the public on the legislation, carry out awareness campaigns to sensibilise citizens regarding issues of domestic violence, violence against women, gender-based violence and stalking/harassment towards women.
- Additionally, the police provide information to the public, on the support and services available to them in such cases/incidents. Above these, awareness leaflets, posters, flashcards and TV messages and video spots have been issued/published for the above-mentioned purposes.
- Training of police officers of all levels and ranks, is being organised frequently/on a systematic basis/according to special duty requirements.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR GENDER EQUALITY

The Office of the Gender Equality Commissioner and the National Mechanism for Women's Rights proceeded to design training seminars to strengthen women's participation in politics. Education has a dual purpose. On the one hand, the strengthening of women's political participation in decision-making bodies so as to strengthen democracy through institutional changes and the promotion of equality. On the other hand, the empowerment of women and the creation of a leadership profile to claim political positions.

Objectives of the educational seminars:

Encouraging women's political participation, strengthening/improving capacities and skills, highlighting good practices of managing political life, preparing/readiness for assuming political office, managing political career challenges.

The target group was women who are interested in getting involved in the political sphere and who are active in the political parties, trade unions and civil society.

The seminars are provided free of charge to the participants. Babysitting service is provided during the seminars.

COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN)

The Office of the Commissioner for Administration, in co-operation with the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration, has been carrying out training seminars on the Code of Conduct to prevent and combat sexual harassment in the public sector. By the end of 2022, a new series of such seminars will begin, for the training of all staff members of the Ministry of Health and other Departments related to Health Services.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The Departments of the MOH as well as the Central Level of the Ministry, are fully aware of Gender Equality issues and will encourage and strengthen staff initiatives for Equality training.

Also, with regard to the management of incidents of violence Officers are trained in corresponding matters, they could participate in seminars that will be organised in the future with the aim of raising awareness and the management of such incidents by Officers of other Ministries/Departments/Agents.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SPORTS AND YOUTH

Policy Changes

The Social Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and Social Insurance have been put under their guardianship a number of unaccompanied minors, applicants for international protection. Subsequently, the Ministry of Education is applying European directives and the action plan of the Interdepartmental Committee for the Integration of children with a migrant background, for the education of all underage persons, especially children with a migrant background, prepared a special programme for the education of unaccompanied minors in schools. As part of their studies at school and during the asylum procedure, there is an effort to empower these children especially in education, technical training, work and employment, access to basic services and the active participation and social inclusion with a view to obtaining further educational and professional qualification. Unaccompanied minors are refugee children group have the highest vulnerability, due to both their recent traumatic experience having lived and the lack of support from their family in their place of arrival. Therefore, the Ministry of Education efforts focused on further support and integration of these children.

Also, in the Educational Programme for Unaccompanied Minors/ who are Applicants for International Protection a Certificate of Attendance was granted to children who would attend the particular programme and in addition the Ministry of Education established three afternoon classes at the State Institutes of Further Education. Such classes ran on a full-time schedule of 20 periods per week. Teachers are employed through the purchase of services (the basic criterion for recruitment being experienced and professional qualifications for teaching Greek as an additional language).

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE

The Ministry of Justice and Public Order and the Deputy Ministry of Social Welfare signed a Memorandum of Co-operation between the Police and the Social Welfare Services for the referral, handling, protection and briefing of potential and recognised victims of trafficking (24/01/2022).

5.3 Institutional changes

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The actions taken by the Medical and Public Health Services for the provision of medical services at the Accommodation Centre for Applicants for International Protection in the context of improving the accessibility of health services to refugees, immigrants and asylum seekers are the following:

- i. The number of doctors increased from 2 to 4,
- ii. The paramedical staff, Nurses and Health Visitors were reinforced, to cover emergency needs and process delayed incidents,
- iii. In the context of reducing the risk of disease transmission at the Accommodation Centre for Applicants for International Protection, various meetings were held with the Competent Bodies in which various suggestions were made to the Ministry of the Interior,
- iv. A comprehensive proposal was drawn up and approved by the Director General of the Ministry of Health regarding the issuance of medical certificates and the keeping of a register of certificates by the Centre's Doctors,
- v. Communications were made both in writing and by phone from the Director of Health and Human Services to the Director of the Public Works Department, for the completion of the lead shielding of the X-ray laboratory at the Accommodation Centre for Applicants for International Protection. Completion of the work will enable chest x-rays to be carried out on all migrants to detect active tuberculosis without delays and without the risk of false negative Mantoux tests.
- vi. Performing a panoramic mouth scan for purposes of establishing the age of unaccompanied children.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DIGITAL POLICY

An action plan for the human capital in Research and Innovation is under development, including measures for promoting gender equality. The plan includes raising-awareness activities, e.g., gender-sensitive budgeting, mapping of national policies in Cyprus at all levels (from government to organisations), best practices, stakeholders' workshop for developing relevant policies.

A Gender Equality Plan for the Deputy Ministry is also under development.

More measures are being promoted by the national funding agency, RIF (Research and Innovation Foundation), in collaboration with the Ministry, with regards to research and innovation in research content and research teams.

RIF measures include:

- Development of Gender Action Plan in 2018
- Funding R&I programmes ensuring gender-balanced formation of research teams, sex/gender analysis in research proposals, promoting use of male and female evaluators.
- Use of gender-sensitive language in all official documents of the Foundation and in all channels of external communication.
- Raising awareness activities e.g., training on gender bias
- Monitoring and evaluation of measures e.g., gender statistics of proposal / project Co-ordinators

6.3 Institutional changes

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DIGITAL POLICY

RIF: The GEP measures focus on promoting a gender-inclusive organisational culture and eliminating unconscious gender biases in all aspects of human resource management: recruitment, retention, career progression, work-life balance, care and family life.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DIGITAL POLICY

DMRID measures under development will include raising awareness of top management at the Ministry (e.g., the importance of gender-sensitive budgeting), followed by training other personnel as well.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

(a) A factor that we consider likely to negatively affect the implementation of the policies and measures mentioned above, concerns the need for the participation of civil society, something that can be implemented through targeted and continuous information campaigns aimed both at women in their workspace as well as to women in their family space, and to cover women of all educational levels to enable the perception that every woman has a voice and rights that she can claim.

(b) By extension, the acceptance of the reforms will be promoted through the information campaigns.

- Regarding the prevention and handling of sexual harassment at the workplace, educational seminars have been planned in order to transfer the necessary skills to the professionals' members of the Equality Committee, that are needed to handle and transfer these cases to the responsible authority.
- Regarding the National Strategy and National Action Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women 2023-2028, training of the health professionals through interactive workshops, is necessary, in order to develop the communication skills that are needed to identify, handle, help or/ and refer these incidents to the responsible services.

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DIGITAL POLICY

Challenges

Resistance to change

Insufficient resources – human and financial to promote actions

Engagement and mobilisation of stakeholders, commitment of personnel at all levels, including leadership

Lessons learned

Importance of raising awareness at all levels, including leadership

8. Additional comments, if any

DEPUTY MINISTRY OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND DIGITAL POLICY

DMRID, as a newly established ministry, would welcome additional expertise from other countries on the development of gender policies in R&I and digital transformation.

Denmark

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

Tripartite agreement on combating sexual harassment in the workplace

The government has landed a tripartite agreement with the social partners in March 2022 on sexual harassment in the workplace. The tripartite agreement contains 17 initiatives, including 8 legislative proposals on compensation for victims of sexual harassment and the clarification of the responsibilities of the employer, among other things.

Implementation of the EU Whistleblowing Directive in Danish legislation

The Danish Parliament adopted the whistle-blower law in June 2021, which entered into force in December 2021 for all public authorities and private organisations with more than 249 employees. The law implements the EU's Whistleblowing Directive and aims to provide a safe channel for reporting of sexual harassment, economic fraud and other unethical behaviour.

Legislation on grooming

The government has landed a political agreement on initiatives to fight digital violations, such as grooming, in June 2022. Based on recommendations from the working group on digital violations, a new separate provision will be included in the Criminal Act, which will criminalise grooming of children and young people under the age of 18. The proposal will be presented in the next parliamentary session.

Stronger protection of LGBT+ persons

In January 2022, a number of provisions entered into force to secure a better protection of LGBT+ persons. A ban on discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and gender characteristics have been made explicit in legislation both inside and outside the labour market. Also, the concepts of gender identity, gender expression and gender characteristics now appears explicitly in the Criminal Act's provisions on hate crimes and hate speech.

Legislation on earmarked leave entered into force

In August 2022, the legislation on earmarked leave entered into force - thus implementing the EU Directive on work-life balance of parents and carers, specifically regarding earmarked parental leave for both parents. The parental leave is by default equally split with 24 weeks for each parent – 11 of which will be earmarked and be non-transferable. Moreover, the new rules will provide better opportunities for diverse forms of families to share the leave as they wish so.

1.2 Policy changes

LGBT+ action plan

The government launched a new LGBT+ action plan in August 2022. The action plan contains 39 initiatives, which promotes the safety, well-being and equal opportunities for LGBT+ persons. The action plan focuses on five areas 1) LGBT+ families, 2) children and young people's well-being, 3) intimate partner violence, sexual assault and hatred toward LGBT+ persons, 4) health and well-being and 5) the fight for rights of LGBT+ persons internationally.

1.3 Institutional changes

Report by the Salary Structure Committee

The Salary Structure Committee, established by the government in 2021, will present its findings in a report in 2022. The Committee analyses, compares salary structures and salary developments in the public sector, and sheds light on benefits of possible changes to the system in order to address the gender pay gap.

The Alliance against sexual harassment

The government established in Spring 2022 an 'Alliance against Sexual Harassment'. The Alliance aims to promote lasting cultural change by maintaining focus on the prevention of sexual harassment and anti-harassment initiatives in the workplace, in education, in cultural life, in communities, sports, volunteer work, etc. Labour market partners, educational and student organisations and organisations from civil society participates in the alliance.

Stronger mandate for the Danish Institute for Human Rights

In 2022, the Danish Institute for Human Rights has been granted the mandate to promote, evaluate and monitor the equal treatment of LGBT+ persons and to combat discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and gender characteristics. The institute also has a mandate to bring cases that are of principle by nature or cases of general public interest to the Equal Treatment Board, which deals with cases of illegal discrimination.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

There are a wide amount of information and guiding activities from a several key actors, including public and private actors like; websites to further the dialogue and awareness raising on the issue of sexual harassment with studies and concrete tools to prevent and manage sexual harassment in workplaces, schools and in other institutions. Also, the Danish Working Environment Authority (WEA) continues its efforts in preventing sexual harassment in workplaces by providing information/campaigns and guidance on the subject as well as carrying out inspections. The WEA furthermore holds meetings and workshops and continues to disseminate knowledge through campaigns to the wider public on measures to prevent and manage sexual harassment.

The Alliance against sexual harassment

As part of the activities in the alliance, the following is expected to be initiated; a national campaign, a study and a conference.

Mutual learning programme on sexual harassment

Denmark is host for a seminar in the Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) in gender equality. The MLP aims to facilitate the exchange of information on gender equality issues and the transferability of good practices between countries. The specific seminar focuses on combatting sexual harassment and gender-based violence. Denmark will present the ongoing work with the Alliance against Sexual Harassment, which aims at raising awareness and at promoting a cultural change in society.

Campaign towards retaining vocationally trained women in the Armed Forces

The Defence Maintenance Service launches in 2022 a campaign targeted vocationally trained women in the Armed Forces as well as women who have to choose an apprenticeship. The campaign deals with the conscious and unconscious prejudices associated with women in a workshop environment and aims to create a new foundation for equality in the Armed Forces. The objective is to retain and recruit more graduate women as well as women under education that must choose an apprenticeship.

Efforts against sexual harassment and sexism in the Danish Armed Forces and the Emergency Management Agency

The Naval Command continues in 2022, among other things, its training of managers in dealing with situations of discrimination and/or transgressive behaviour on the basis of sex. The Emergency Management Agency will in 2022 evaluate and implement a revised teaching material to sergeant trainees on handling offending behaviour as well as evaluate on a gender shared housing initiative, and whether it has had an effect on the number of cases of violating behaviour.

Focus on antidiscrimination of LGBT+ persons in sports

Recent studies show that LGBT+ persons feel excluded and experience discrimination in sports. The initiative called #Gamechanger is therefore strengthened and works for inclusion and diversity in sports. The initiative will promote and enhance the well-being and participation of LGBT+ persons through information campaigns, online platforms, development of methods and tools for coaches and managers to create a safe and accessible environment in sports clubs and associations.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Initiatives to counter harmful content online

Children and young people must have the necessary support to avoid harmful content on the internet. Thus, the government has set aside DKK 4 million in 2022 (as well as in 2021), to Save the Children's counselling service "SletDet (Delete It)".

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Provision on stalking in the Criminal Act

In August 2021, the government and several other parties launched 14 initiatives to combat stalking, among other things this includes a provision on stalking in the Criminal Act. The provision has entered into force in January 2022.

2.2 Policy changes

Policy proposal on a new action plan to combat partner violence and partner homicides

In June 2022, the government launched a proposal for a new action plan to combat partner violence and partner homicides. The proposal includes 22 initiatives focusing on strengthening the awareness, prevention and detection of partner violence. The proposal was based on input gathered from relevant women's rights organisations, domestic abuse shelters etc. The political parties in the parliament will negotiate the proposal in the fall of 2022.

National action plan to combat human trafficking

The government launched a new national action plan to combat human trafficking. The action plan entails a strengthened effort for victims of human trafficking. The outreach work in the field of prostitution under the auspices of the government-funded NGO's is reinforced, the specialised accommodation for victims of trafficking is upgraded, and there is a strengthened focus on the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators.

2.3 Institutional changes

Focus on human trafficking through the use of pro forma marriages

In 2022, the Agency of Family Law will have an increased focus on uncovering human trafficking cases through marriage. The Agency will try to develop a tool that systematically collects knowledge and experiences from concrete and/or suspected cases of human trafficking to make caseworkers more aware of possible trafficking indicators.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Campaign on awareness of the rape helpline

In Autumn 2022, the Danish NGO 'Lev Uden Vold' (Live Without Violence) launches a campaign aimed at reaching out to victims of rape and sexual assault. The campaign will increase awareness of the national phone hotline 1888 among victims and potential victims of sexual assault and rape. The aim is for more rape victims and victims of sexual violence to contact the hotline for an initial conversation about opportunities for help and information on referral mechanisms. The campaign will also nuance the collective understanding of rape, i.a. on the basis of a new study from Lev Uden Vold about victims' experiences with the use of force, resistance and consequences of sexualised assault.

Research Study on intimate partner violence

As a part of the national action plan to combat physical and psychological violence in intimate relationships 2019-2022, the Public Health Department at the University of Southern Denmark has examined the extent of violence and assault in 2021. The study follows up on previous studies from 2005, 2010 and 2017. The study was published in June 2022.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

Strengthened efforts towards victims of intimate partner violence

As a result of the new political agreement for the police and prosecution service, the government has established specialised teams in every police district in Denmark. The specialised teams work towards optimizing the police's handling of cases regarding domestic violence, rape, stalking etc., so that the police have a better understanding and concrete knowledge of trauma, help and protective measures when dealing with victims in their work.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

Strengthened legislation on gender balance in management and on executive boards

The Danish Parliament passed in May 2022 legislation, which will support the work to promote a more equal gender composition in management and boards in private companies and in the public sector. The legislative proposals will enter into force in January 2023. Covered companies and institutions are required to, among other things, to establish target figures for the gender composition in the upper management levels in addition to boards, and that greater transparency is created about the target figures and the development in the gender composition with a publicly accessible website (see 4.3). Several public institutions are covered as well, e.g., municipalities and regions.

Denmark's accession to the EU 'Women on Boards' Directive

In March 2022, Denmark supported the EU Directive proposal on gender balance among ordinary board members in large-listed companies and related measures. The Directive obliges i.a. member states to support large-listed companies, which do not have a 40/60% gender distribution on the board, to introduce predetermined, clear and unambiguous appointment criteria to achieve a 40% target for the board or a 33% target for both the board and the management.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Legislation on the responsibilities of municipalities on battling negative social control, honour-related conflicts and extremism

The government is working on a new bill on 'Law of the Child', which sets requirements for the municipalities in relation to preventing, tracking and dealing with negative social control, honour-related conflicts and extremism. The law is expected to enter into force in January 2023.

Strengthening the protection of ethnic minority women against partner violence

The government has proposed to broaden of the provision regarding domestic violence in the Aliens Act. Furthermore, the government has proposed strengthening the detection and treatment in cases of domestic violence against pregnant women within the health care system, with a special focus on women belonging to minority groups.

5.2 Policy changes

The Commission on the Forgotten Struggle for Women's Rights

The government established in January 2022 the Commission on the Forgotten Struggle for Women's Rights. The Commission works to discuss possible measures and recommendations to secure and strengthen the freedom and rights of women and girls with an ethnic minority background. In August 2022, the Commission presented its partial recommendations, whereas the final report expects to come out in early 2023.

5.3 Institutional changes

Support for minority ethnic women exposed to negative social control and violence

The government provides financial support to several non-governmental organisations that do outreach work, offers counselling and supply rooms at shelters as well as educate women from exposed residential areas in democratic formation, sexuality, gender equality, rights, forms of violence and negative social control.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

Guidelines for caseworkers in handling social control

The government presented in August 2022 a set of guidelines that gives municipal caseworkers at job centres a better overview of the options for excluding a co-resident from meetings and consultations if they suspect that the person concerned is exercising negative social control.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Legislation on gender equality in conscription

The government presents in 2022 a legislative proposal on increased gender equality in conscription. With the proposal, women will be equal to men in terms of rights and responsibilities when it comes to military service.

Digital mail to all parents or custodians entered into force

The law on digital mail to all parents or custodians entered into force in March 2022. The law contributes to greater equality between parents, as messages concerning the child from schools, hospitals etc. is sent to both parents and/or custodians.

Estonia

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

Amendments in the parental leave benefit system that allow for more flexibility in reconciling work and family life came into force 1st April 2022. The main goal of the changes is to encourage more fathers to share the care responsibilities and to provide both women and men with better possibilities for reconciliation of work and family life, especially by increasing flexibility of parental leave system.

Parents will now have the opportunity to take parental leave at the same time for up to 60 days, during which time both parents will be paid parental benefit. This way, both parents can care for the child at the same time. **Additionally**, parents will also be allowed to **use the parental leave and benefit by calendar days** until the child reaches the age of three. This means, for example, that the parent can continue to work part time after having a child by dividing the parental benefit over a longer period of time or both parents can stay home with the child alternately.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2022 a **research project REGE – “Reducing the Gender Wage Gap”** was finalised. This analysis aimed to further explain the reasons behind the gender pay gap in Estonia, through linking together different existing databases, adding qualitative analysis, and using simulation and prognosis models, as well as to design evidence-based policy recommendations to decrease the gender pay gap. The research methodology enabled to explain a significantly larger part of the gender pay gap in Estonia – 40% instead of previous 15%.

As a part of the gender pay gap research project, a **prototype of a digital tool (Pay Mirror)** was developed in co-operation with Tallinn University and Statistics Estonia. Using administrative data, this tool will enable employers to measure and analyse the gender pay gap in their organisations, without increasing the administrative burden. The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for developing this prototype further and make the digital tool available for the employers by 2024.

Project **“Nudging to Support Stereotype-free Career Choices and Working Conditions”** was finalised in May 2022. The aim of the research project was to help find ways to support teachers and career advisers in promoting career choices that are free of gender stereotypes, and to support employers in ensuring equal and fair working conditions and stereotype free recruitment and promotion.

To increase **men`s participation in carrying the care burden and to increase the take-up of the 30-calendar-day paternity leave**, an applied research project, using the methods of behavioural psychology was carried out to test suitable nudges to achieve these aims. The project was finalised in 2022.

A **Gender Equality Monitory** was carried out in 2022. The survey included questions to examine whether COVID-related restrictions changed the sharing of unpaid work and care duties between women and men in Estonian families. The results of the survey will be published in November 2022.

In 2019, the Ministry of Social Affairs started a new form of co-operation with civil society organisations. **Strategic partnerships** provide long-term funding to **several feminist/women`s rights organisations**. The first round of open calls for strategic partnerships to promote gender equality took place in 2019. The second round of open calls for promotion of gender equality was announced in 2022 and resulted in three-year strategic partnership contracts with the Estonian Women`s Studies and Resource Centre and NGO Oma Tuba (together with Praxis Centre for Policy Studies). The NGO Oma Tuba launched a feminist web magazine called Feministeerium (feministeerium.ee) in 2015, which has currently approximately 11,000 readers per month. NGO Oma Tuba has raised

awareness on various issues regarding gender inequality, gender-based violence and the negative impact of gender stereotypes and has also promoted temporary special measures and a consent-based approach to rape, sexual violence and sexual assault in legislation. The Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Centre (ENUT) has been publishing the first and only peer-reviewed academic gender studies journal (Ariadne's Clew) from 2000-2018. After a short hiatus in 2018, ENUT plans to re-launch the journal in 2022 and continue publishing the magazine as a part of strategic partnership agreement with the Ministry of Social Affairs. ENUT also maintains a library for women's and gender studies and provides support for students interested in gender studies and gender issues in their research field.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

In May 2022 Parliament adopted the **amendment of the Penal Code**, setting the minimum age of sexual self-determination to sixteen years, with the exception of cases where the age difference between the legal person and the person aged fourteen to sixteen is not bigger than five years.

In May 2022 the **amendment of the Family Law**, setting the minimum age of marriage at 18 without exceptions, was passed. The previous exception of court extending the active legal capacity of a person who has attained at least 15 years of age and getting married was used rarely – in 2018 there was one marriage and in 2019, four marriages.

The Victim Support Act is undergoing a renewal process. The draft law was finalised in September 2022. The law introduces for the first time the principles of treatment of victims, the educational requirements of specialists working with victims, and specifies, among other things, the principles of providing services to victims of human trafficking and supplements the list of services.

For victims of domestic and sexual violence, psychological help and support in recovering from trauma will become more accessible. The prerequisite for receiving psychological help will no longer be tied to initiation of criminal proceedings.

The new Victim Support Act is scheduled to come into force in 2023.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

In the framework of Norway Grants projects, several awareness-raising activities to involve men and boys to act against violence are being implemented. In 2021, campaign on domestic violence, involving men as role models taking a stand against violence, took place (<https://xn--snavigi-eua6k.ee/>). In 2022, campaign against buying of sex was conducted (<https://motlepeaga.ee/>), to reduce prostitution and trafficking in women.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

Since 24 February 2022, when Russia launched a full-scale war against Ukraine, more than 55,000 war refugees from Ukraine have fled to Estonia. Estonian society, government and state institutions, as well as private individuals and NGO-s are committed to helping the people of Ukraine who have fled their homes.

In accordance with a decision by the Estonian government, Ukrainian citizens and their family members who fled Ukraine on or after February 24 are granted temporary protection, which includes an Estonian residence permit valid for one year. Should the war in Ukraine continue, it is possible to extend temporary protection if necessary.

Applying for temporary protection is not compulsory for war refugees but will afford them the same access to different services and benefits as Estonian residents have. Temporary protection entitles the person to accommodation and food, health care services, employment, benefits and allowances, social services, education, language learning and an adjustment programme. As recipients of temporary protection, the war refugees get the right to receive subsistence benefits, family benefits, social benefits, as well as labour market services and labour market support on the same basis as other people who live in Estonia permanently or temporarily.

34,900 war refugees from Ukraine have applied and been granted a temporary protection status. Most of the receivers of a temporary protection status are women and children. Out of 34,900 people, 37% are underaged, 49% are women aged 18 or older, and 14% are men aged 18 or older.

Work

Once a person has been granted temporary protection, they can start working or register as unemployed and therefore get unemployment allowance, training opportunities, counselling and other benefits offered by Unemployment Insurance Fund.

Employers can apply for service supporting the employment of recipients of international protection for example a one-time mentorship payment, compensation of professional training and compensation of costs related to translation services and acquiring a qualification.

Childcare and education

Local municipalities have obligation to ensure all 1.5-7-year-old children in their service area a possibility to attend kindergarten or child-care.

7–17-year-old children have right as well as obligation for acquiring education. There is a one-time allowance for all school-age children (aged 7-19) who have received international protection or temporary protection and are entering schools in Estonia intended for expenses related to starting school.

Psychosocial crisis support

Psychosocial crisis support is provided to people and families who have fled the war, in order to minimise the impact of the traumatic event on their ability to cope. There are several psychosocial crisis support channels at work. Psychosocial crisis support is available at the information points and in the accommodation establishments. The 24/7 crisis support telephone line offers mental health support in Estonian, English, Ukrainian and Russian. There is also a possibility to arrange video counselling in Ukrainian. Additionally, the school psychologists' Ukrainian Advice Line takes calls from people working with children and young people, students and parents. Information materials are available in English, Russian and Ukrainian.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.3 Institutional changes

In order to improve implementation of gender mainstreaming strategy, the Ministry of Social Affairs is implementing a **pilot project** together with other ministries to find the most efficient and sustainable solution for co-ordinating, supporting and implementing this strategy. Results of this project will be presented in 2023. Similar project on the municipal level is planned to take place in Ida-Viru County.

In the process of preparing the 2021+ funding period, the **Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Competence Centre for the use of the Cohesion Policy Funding** has continued to provide knowledge-based, effective, and motivating support for promoting gender equality and equal opportunities. One of the main tasks of the centre has been to provide feedback and counselling in the process of preparing conditions for granting support from the ESI Funds and to carry out surveys

to analyse the outcomes of gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities activities at project level. The centre has also created a variety of information materials, including thematic factsheets and guidelines for implementing agencies, intermediate bodies and users of the funds and organised trainings to support their efforts. In addition, it co-ordinates the work of an equal opportunities network to support a practical co-operation in promoting gender equality and equal opportunities in the use of ESI Funds.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In December 2021, an electronic **collection of articles**³ **“Towards a Balance Society. Women and Men in Estonia”** was published. The compilation focuses on the gender equality situation on topics such as women and men in the labour market, work-life balance, women among founders of start-ups, gender dimension of a migration, gender and health, gender aspects of ageing, women in politics, civil society and activism, gender and environment, gender-based violence, sexual harassment, education and gender equality, women in science, equal opportunities for women and men in performing and audio-visual arts, gender in music, social media, and traditional media. In **2022 a series of video-lectures will be issued** to promote the collection of articles and disseminate the content.

Virtual gender equality competence centre (vordsuskeskus.ee), that was developed by the Ministry of Social Affairs in the framework of the Norway Grants project and was finalised in the end of 2021, continues to provide support to policymakers and other relevant stakeholders in promoting gender equality. By the end of 2022 an **online training module for policy makers to increase their knowledge of gender mainstreaming** will be developed and made public in 2023.

³ The compilation of articles „Towards a Balanced Society. Women and Men in Estonia III“ is available in Estonian at: <https://vordsuskeskus.ee/sites/default/files/2021-11/TEEL%20TASAKAALUSTATUD%20%C3%9CHISKONDA%20III.pdf>. Short summaries of the articles will be translated into English in 2022.

Finland

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

On 1 August 2022, the council of the state of Finland published a reform on family leave. The reform allows parents more flexibility with the division of childcare responsibilities. In addition to promoting equality between parents, the reform also aims to enhance equality in the workplace and facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life. The reform will give both parents a quota of 160 daily allowance days per child (6.4 months). A parent will be allowed to transfer up to 63 daily allowance days of their own quota to the other parent. The non-transferable quota for each parent is 97 working days (3.9 months). There will also be a pregnancy allowance period for the 40 final days of pregnancy bringing the total number of allowance days to 360 (14.4 months). Single parent families have the same amount of daily allowance days (320+40). Altogether the length of parental leaves is now 1.7 months longer than previously. The reform promotes equal share of childcare for parents and employers as an act of gender equality. Parental leave can be divided into a maximum of four periods. Also, a new right to carers' leave - unpaid - up to five days per year was introduced.

1.2 Policy changes

In June 2021, the Ministry of Education and Culture commissioned the organisation representing the arts and culture sector (Forum Artis) to draw up guidelines on cultural ethics in co-operation with actors in the sector. The assignment was based on problems in the sector related to, for example, gender equality and sexual harassment. The deadline for the assignment is 31 December 2022.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

1. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health organised four round-table discussions on sexual harassment with the decision makers and experts in various sectors, among them sports, working life, culture and rescue service sector (September 2021-October 2022). The aim was to encourage discussion and prevention in sectors where sexual harassment cases were recently reported.

2. A follow-up study by the Ministry of Education and Culture on harassment and other inappropriate treatment in the film and theatre industry will be completed in the end of 2022. The report examines the discussions and changes in the film and theatre industry in 2018-2022 and the situation today. In 2018, the Ministry of Education and Culture published a report on harassment and other inappropriate treatment in the film and theatre industry. The follow-up study will continue this work.

3. The first findings of Government funded project "The impact of the Covid-19 crisis in Finland" (VN TEAS) were published in spring 2022 and showed evidence on the gendered impacts of the pandemic and effectiveness of the policy responses in Finland. (<https://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/143669>)

1.5 Other pertinent developments

1. The Government Report on Gender Equality Policy, second in row, was adopted in June 2022. The report sets long-term objectives for gender equality in Finland. One of the seven strategic objectives
2. Ministries continue to implement the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2020-23, which contains nearly 60 different measures. Some of them will be described in this annual report. (<https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/162844>)

3. (f) The government proposal (HE 7/2021 vp) concerning adding gender to chapter 6, section 5 of the Criminal Code among the motives that constitute grounds for increasing the punishment of any offence is being considered by the Parliament.

4. The National Teacher Education Forum, nominated by the Ministry of Education and Culture, revised the Teacher Education Development Programme for 2022-2026 (<http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi->

3 fe2022053140998). The programme aims to meet the new needs of teacher education in the context of the 2020s and covers teachers' core education and induction as well as career-long professional and continuous learning. There are challenges related to equity and equality, to support and guidance for learners and the accessibility of education, for example.

5. In 2021-2022, KOTAMO project funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture studied the state of equality, equity and diversity of research and educational staff in Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences. The topics of the project included recruitment, career development, and equality and non-discrimination in the working field. The Ministry of Education and Culture prepared an accessibility plan for higher education in 2020– 2021 in accordance with the government program. The plan was published on 15.6.2021. The review examines the following background factors: family background, regional accessibility of higher education, gender segregation, migrant background, functional limitations and disability, belonging to linguistic and cultural minorities, diverse learning, and belonging to sexual and gender minorities. <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-263-838-0>

6. The Ministry of Education and Culture has instructed higher education institutions to draw up their own accessibility plans during 2022 based on the common guidelines contained in the accessibility plan for higher education. In the future, higher education institutions will report on the attainment of the objectives of their accessibility plans, and they will be monitored as part of the guidance process between higher education institutions and the Ministry of Education and Culture.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Government has reformed provisions on sexual offences in the Finnish Criminal Code (Chapter 20). The legislation will enter into force on 1 January 2023. The reform aims to strengthen everyone's right to sexual self-determination and the protection of personal integrity. At the same time, the extensive reform will harmonise and clarify the provisions on sexual offences in the Criminal Code. The definition of rape in the Criminal Code will be explicitly based on consent.

In the new legislation rape is defined as sexual intercourse with a person who does not participate in it voluntarily. Provisions on other sexual offences will also be reinforced. The offence of sexual harassment can also be committed in ways other than touching another person. Unauthorised dissemination of a sexual image depicting another person is separately punishable, which makes it possible to intervene more effectively also in sexual offences committed on the Internet and through electronic communication. The reform will also strengthen the various provisions for sexual offences against children. The reformed legislation will reinforce the implementation of the relevant Council of Europe and UN Conventions in Finland, most notably the Istanbul and Lanzarote Conventions.

2.2 Policy changes

1. Committee for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (NAPE) is responsible for drawing up a national implementation plan for the Istanbul Convention in Finland. The first Action Plan (2018–2021), containing 48 measures, was completed at the end of 2017 and the measures implemented by the end of 2021. The evaluation of the plan "Solid unstructured foundation - Assessment of the Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention for 2018–2021" was published in March 2022 (<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-8663-3> , only in Finnish, abstract available also in English).

2. The second Action plan, covering the next four years (2022–2025) was published on 8 March 2022 to advance and step up the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Finland. The objectives are largely based on the recommendations issued by GREVIO. The three main objectives of the plan aim at strengthening i.) gender perspective and intersectionality in the implementation of the

Istanbul Convention, ii.) reinforcing intersectoral and multi-professional co-operation and iii.) improving both the identification of violence against women and domestic violence and intervention in them. Similar to the previous plan, the measures proposed in the plan extend to all relevant governmental agencies and also involve non-governmental organisations. The plan is also available in English (<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-9704-2>)

3. The Ministry of justice published Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women for 2020-2023 in October 2020. The crosscutting theme of the Action Plan is the prevention of violence. Of specific forms of violence, the Action Plan covers honour-related violence and digital violence. The plan contains altogether 32 measures. The implementation period of the Action Plan extends from autumn 2020 until spring 2023. (<https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/162499>, also 2.4)

4. The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare issued 2022 instructions for the municipalities and wellbeing services counties on the co-ordination and prevention of domestic violence and intimate partner violence (<https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-343-878-1>, available only in Finnish).

2.4 Research and awareness raising

1. The Action Plan for Combating Violence against Women for 2020-2023 contains the following research projects: 1. A legal analysis on the potential criminalisation of coercive control/mental violence, including an analysis on the functioning of the legislation on persecution. 2. A study examining the chains of events leading to intimate partner homicide against women. 3. A study on digital violence against women. 4. Finland participates in the EU gender-based violence survey.

2. The National Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings contains the following research projects: 1. Review the manner of application of the grounds for a residence permit of a victim of human trafficking under the Aliens Act and any challenges encountered in application. 2. Examine why the provision of the Criminal Code concerning abuse of a victim of sexual trade is only seldom applied.

3. Examine the application of the criminal provisions on human trafficking and associated crimes and any challenges relating to their application.

4. Review the status quo relating to the fundamental principle of the legal system of imposing no punishment for a crime a person is compelled to commit (principle of non-punishment).

5. Review the manner of application of the provision of the Aliens Act on suspicion of selling sex as grounds for denial of admittance or stay and, based on the review, assess any needs for amendment of legislation and needs to develop practices.

6. In late 2021, the Ministry of the Interior carried a study to launch a permanent intimate partner killing study to enhance the risk assessment of domestic violence and prevent serious crimes against women. The study was published in May 2022 and preparations for the possible deployment of the research function will continue in co-operation with other ministries.

7. In 2021, the police government implemented the MARAK project, which led to a round of police units in spring 2021 and resulted in, inter alia, a report on the state of play and areas for improvement in the fight against violence against women and violence against women in the police 2021. The MARAK project prepared a comprehensive online training package for the police and an operational handbook on tackling and preventing domestic violence. The handbook was published in March 2022 and the training will take place in autumn 2022.

(Also priority 1.4)

8. In March 2022, the Prime Minister’s Office published a study on domestic violence experienced by the people with disabilities. The research report “Frequency of domestic violence experienced by persons with disabilities and availability of services - A quantitative and qualitative examination” can be found here (the abstract is in English): https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/163918/VNTEAS_2022_24.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y. The study was carried out by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, University of Jyväskylä and Statistics Finland.

9. The costs of violence were studied in 2021–2022. In August 2022, the Prime Minister’s Office published a report “Domestic violence-related use of services and the resulting costs in health, social and legal services”. The report can be found here (only in Finnish, the abstract also in English): <http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-385-2>

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

In accordance with the Government programme, the Ministry of Justice appointed a working group to assess ways to enhance the effectiveness of restraining orders in 2020. On basis of the working group report proposals to reform the legislation on restraining orders were prepared in the Ministry of Justice. The Government proposal was submitted to Parliament in September 2022. The reform aims to improve the effectiveness of restraining orders, reduce the incidence of violations of restraining orders and improve the safety of victims of intimate partner violence in particular. According to the proposal, in cases of immediate danger, the police should order emergency barring orders at their own initiative regardless of whether victims are able to apply for the order themselves. In most serious cases, compliance with extended restraining orders could be monitored electronically. Applying for a restraining order would be free of charge in all situations while currently a fee is charged in cases where the restraining order is not granted. The aim is that the new legislation will enter into force in autumn 2023.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising

As part of the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality (2020-2023), the government has commissioned a study on the factors why women do not make up a higher percentage of Board members, management group members and CEOs in listed companies. The project has started in the spring 2022 and the report will be finalised in the beginning of 2023.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

The Government Report on Gender Equality Policy was adopted in June 2022. The report sets long-term objectives for gender equality in Finland. One of the seven strategic objectives concerns equal opportunities to participate and influence in society as well as balanced division of power between genders in politics, economy and society. Discrimination or hate speech based on gender should not limit the freedom of expression or participation.

See <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/164219> (FI/SE).

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

The Government has proposed amendments to the Act on the Reception of Persons Applying for International Protection and on the Identification of and Assistance to Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings. The purpose is to improve the status of victims, regardless of the progress of related criminal proceedings in a human trafficking case. The amendments would also promote the enforcement of criminal liability, as the persons who have sought assistance are better placed to report the abuse they have experienced to the police. The amendments will be submitted to Parliament during the autumn 2022. [Ihmiskaupan uhrien asemaa parantavat lakimuutokset lausuntokierrokselle - Sisäministeriö \(intermin.fi\)](#)

5.2 Policy changes

1. The Finnish Migration Services have examined practice and case law on residence permits on a continuous basis issued to victims of human trafficking as well as prepared a training plan on the phenomenon of human trafficking.

2. In 2022, the Ministry of Justice published a study on ways to promote access to services under the Integration Act. The study included integration training, services in support of employment and wellbeing in respect of victims of human trafficking who have exceeded the integration period. Further needs for development are under discussion. In the context of the reform of the Integration Act, the access of victims of human trafficking to services is to be secured to promote integration. The aim is to prevent re-victimisation and to reinforce the victims' wellbeing and attachment to society.

3. Training in the identification of victims of human trafficking and in their service needs is provided to the staff of Employment and Economic Development Offices (TE Offices), instructors in training to migrants and the staff of municipal employment trials and multi-professional guidance and counselling points.

4. Training for staff in the field of criminal sanctions in order to identify victims of human trafficking and improve their standing (incl. identification of trafficking for forced criminal activities) has been organised.

5. On the basis of existing information, a concise information kit done on human trafficking and related exploitation to be used in support of education will be put together.

6. The anti-trafficking action has been included in the report on equality policy.

7. The prevention of human trafficking has been incorporated in the Government Report on Development Policy.

5.3 Institutional changes

The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is providing finance for a co-ordinator's mission against honour-related violence in the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare from the beginning of 2021. The role of the co-ordinator is to build knowledge on honour-related violence and to work with all stakeholders and organisations to combat honour-related violence.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

1. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is funding a project of the Family Federation of Finland in which they train professionals of various sectors as well as people from the immigrant communities in sexual health, gender equality and self-determination issues. They provide gender equality and sexual health training for integration education teachers and train community interpreters on these issues. The aim of the project is to strengthen social awareness of immigrants, especially in matters related to equality, sexuality, self-determination and harmful traditions.

2. The Ministry of Education and Culture and Arts Promotion Centre Finland have, in co-operation with organisations, developed cultural diversity and sustainable development dialogue cards that the cultural sector can use for example in training events and in the development of practical working life. The cards are based on the Sustainable Development Goals of the UNESCO 2030 Agenda. The dialogue tool is part of the practical implementation of the policy and measures proposed in the final report of the working group on the Arts, culture and diverse Finland appointed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The dialogue tool will be completed by the end of 2022.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

During the year 2022 The Ministry of Employment and the Economy is financing 12 projects, which are aiming for integration and support for immigrant families. The projects include measures to reach out stay-at-home parents, especially women. The projects provide hobby or leisure activities, language training, improvement of readiness for work and other social activities. Projects are required to take into account different gender expectations and to lower the possible reflection of gender roles in integration. The main objective is to promote integration and inclusion.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

In September 2022 the Government has given a proposition for a change in the Act on Equality between women and men to include a compulsory gender equality plan in the early childhood education. The aim is to promote gender equality in the early childhood education.

6.2 Policy changes

1. Since 2016 gender equality and diversity has been one of the criteria for state support. Sport organisations are still required to attach their gender equality and equity plans to their application for grants to the Ministry of Education and Culture.

2. Based on the objectives in the Government programme, there are several Gender Mainstreaming objectives and actions in the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality 2020-2023. The actions were explained in a previous report (9/2019-9/2020). The final report and evaluation of the achievement of the targets will be drawn up in early 2023. The Action Plan in English: <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/162844>

3. There are gender mainstreaming co-ordinators and gender mainstreaming working groups in each ministry. All the ministries also have a specific gender mainstreaming action plan. Some ministries have intensified their gender mainstreaming co-operation with the organisations within their administrative sector, which has already brought some good new openings (e.g., Ministry of Transport and Communications, see a study on Pedestrian slip-and-fall accidents and their prevention: an equality perspective: <https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/163848>. The study is in Finnish, but there is a summary in English.)

6.4 Research and awareness raising

1. A study, financed by the Ministry of Finance, will be launched in the autumn of 2022 investigating the gender effects of the economic policy conducted during the parliamentary term 2019-2023. In the study the gender effects of various grant and taxation changes made during the parliamentary term 2019-2023 will be estimated with the help of microsimulation models. In addition, the effects of pivotal reforms made during the term will also be analysed. The study shall be ready in March 2023.

2. The first digital gender equality and gender mainstreaming training course for civil servants was published in March 2020. It is available to all the civil servants in the country. In some ministries the training course is compulsory, and in those ministries appr. 90% of the staff has taken it.

3. In 2021 Finland's Climate and Energy Strategy was assessed for its gender impacts, in accordance with the Government Action Plan for Gender Equality. The report examines the different impacts that the proposed policy measures have on men and women. The publication in Finnish includes an Executive Summary in English and is digitally available:

<https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/handle/10024/163440>

An English version of the media release: https://valtioneuvosto.fi/-/1410877/arvio-tulevan-ilmasto-ja-energiastrategian-sukupuolivaikutuksista-valmistunut?languageId=en_US

4. The impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on gender equality in Finland were analysed in a research project that provided information on the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on different sociodemographic groups of women and men and its consequences for gender equality in Finland. The final report was published in May 2022. More information of the project in English:

<https://thl.fi/en/web/thlfi-en/research-and-development/research-and-projects/the-impact-of-the-covid-19-crisis-on-gender-equality-in-finland>

5. Partly EU-funded Action! -project promoted gender equality and the employment of female professionals in the audio-visual field, developed measures to remove obstacles and support employment measures in the sector during 2019-22. The project was realised in the Department of Film and Television, School of Arts, Aalto University, in co-operation with Women in Finland and Television Finland (WIFT Finland) association. Numerous events, seminars and training were organised in order to mitigate the gender segregation of work and educational careers. The project succeeded in locating, clarifying and describing the reasons for failures in funding, employment and industry practices and maintained a discussion about the professional needs of work culture, especially management.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

1. Implementation of the Guideline for the Cross-Cutting Objectives in the Finnish Development Policy and Co-operation (adopted in 2020) and building capacity on its use. Gender equality is one of the crosscutting objectives and the guideline provides guidance on gender mainstreaming in the Finnish development policy and co-operation.

2. The Directions of the Ministry of Finance to the ministries to draw up a budget proposal requires that every ministry makes a summary of the gender relevant issues in their budget proposal. In 2020 The Ministry of Finance specified the requirement and in co-operation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health offered some training on gender responsive budgeting. As a result, more gender relevant issues are identified in the ministries and included in the budget proposals.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Finnish NGOs have noticed anti-gender movement/groups/action which is from time to time hindering their work in promoting gender equality. Ministries have drafted guidelines about gender equality to support civil servants working with EU issues.

8. Additional comments, if any

The study about cost of violence and another study about violence against disabled people might be interesting to GREVIO or GEC members.

Germany

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.3 Institutional changes

A digital strategy meeting on the Girls' Day and Boys' Day projects was held in November 2021. Girls' Day and Boys' Day aim to promote career orientation without gender stereotypes. The digital strategy session was attended by representatives from the ministries of education and equal opportunities in the German federal states. Also, the funding ministries have been involved. Furthermore, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. A decisive learning from the strategy meeting was that a career orientation programme such as Girls' Day and Boys' Day is particularly effective if the teachers deal with it intensively in the classroom in the run-up to the day of action. Accordingly, it was agreed that the nationwide Girls' Day and Boys' Day co-ordination centres should develop digital information workshops for teachers. In these workshops, teachers are to be made aware of the importance of the action day and helped to prepare for it. The workshops for teachers were realised in January and February 2022.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

On April 28, 2022, the Girls' Day and Boys' Day action days were held nationwide. This is a nationwide event of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth to promote career orientation free of gender stereotypes. Around 120,000 schoolchildren took part in the day of action, visiting companies and institutions that have previously been male- or female-dominated. Girls gained insight into male-dominated occupational fields, such as skilled trades, while boys in particular gained insight into social and healthcare jobs. More than 11,000 companies and institutions nationwide took part in the day of action.

Supported by the BMFSFJ, The ProQuote Medien initiative (initiative advocating gender equality in the media) regularly publishes studies on the share of women in journalistic power in Germany (see also 1.5).

The Federal Association of Directors (Bundesverband Regie e.V., BVR) publishes an annual diversity report, also with the support of the BMFSFJ. The most recent 7th Diversity Report for 2019 and 2020, which was published in 2022, contains a gender analysis regarding the method to award contracts to directors in German prime-time fiction programmes of the TV stations ARD, ZDF, RTL, SAT.1, Pro7, VOX and of streaming providers and in the German cinema industry.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The declaration "Joint action against sexism and sexual harassment", which was launched with important partners such as the Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA) and the Association of German Cities (Deutscher Städtetag) with Federal Minister Lambrecht in October 2021, in the meantime encompasses far more than 300 – to some extent high-ranking – signatories from business, public sphere, culture and media as well as civil society, and thus represents a unique network, please see <https://www.dialogforen-gegen-sexismus.de/gemeinsame-erklaerung-gegen-sexismus>.

The joint declaration is the outcome of the "Dialogue Forums against Sexism", in which more than 60 organisations from business, government, media and civil society have discussed and compiled effective measures against sexism in the world of work, culture and media, and the public sphere. The measures have been published in the booklet titled "Together against Sexism" since June 2021 and have been circulated and disseminated ever since, for instance by drawing people's attention to it in newsletters and by conducting targeted forums.

The European Academy for Women in Politics and Business (EAF Berlin) is the project partner.

The coalition agreement for the 20th legislative term provides for the following: “We want a strong alliance against sexism”. The declaration and the dialogue forums serve as a basis for establishing such an effective nationwide alliance.

Pinkstinks

Pinkstinks is a protest and educational organisation against sexism and homophobia. Pinkstinks criticises gender stereotypes in media and advertising and shows alternatives for more diversity. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) provides funding to an online platform called “School against Sexism” (Schule gegen Sexismus) which is run by Pinkstinks. This school aims at promoting media participation in discussions about sexism, gender and sexist discrimination as well as preventing and combating sexism, sexual violence, harassment and discrimination by providing educational media services. Humorous and funny content is primarily disseminated via social media channels.

ProQuote Medien (ProQuota Media)

With the support of the BMFSFJ the ProQuote Medien (PQM) initiative, which was founded in 2012, draws public attention to the low rate of women in leadership positions in the media sector. The association regularly takes a stand on current issues of women’s politics, produces the podcast series “Macht’s gleich” (Do it equally), hosts an annual expert conference and provides networking opportunities for its members. Furthermore, PQM regularly publishes studies on the share of women publishers in Germany (please also see 1.4).

ProQuote Bühne (ProQuota Stage)

The initiative ProQuote Bühne is a group of stage directors and other creative minds in the world of theatre in Germany that campaigns for equal representation. It calls for a 50% share of women in all artistic theatric fields. Numerous people from the arts, politics, media and society support them in their concern. The BMFSFJ has funded the series of events titled “BE:COME VISIBLE” at Volksbühne Berlin where macrosocial and sector-specific deficits have been made visible and also synergy-creating networking by stakeholders in this field has taken place.

Power to transform

The initiative titled “Power to transform”, supported by the BMFSFJ, carried out brief morning online events where expert knowledge on the topic of sexism and media was conveyed in an entertaining way. The various topics and best practice examples were presented by different researchers, journalists and authors. Various podcasts on the topic of sexism and discrimination were part of the series just like a periodic newsletter containing information on political developments, bills, current events, etc.

The project “Neue Bilder braucht das Land” by the German Association of Women Journalists

The project “Neue Bilder braucht das Land – für eine geschlechtergerechte Bildsprache” (Our country needs new images – for a gender-responsive visual language) will still be launched in 2022 with the support of the BMFSFJ. The project seeks to spread gender-fair footage and moving images via an Instagram channel and at expert conferences. Gender-fair imaging within the context of journalistic reporting, on the one hand, aims at mapping societal diversity in its variety as realistically and as free from prejudice as possible and on the other hand, at making it visible and deconstructing visual stereotypes and redefining them in terms of gender sensitivity. The aim is to develop practical guidance on a gender-sensitive handling of images and videos for journalists.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.4 Research and awareness raising

The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth commissioned a new study on “Violence against Women with Disabilities in all sheltered workshops”. The three-year study has been launched in July 2021.

The BMFSFJ continues to provide funding for the German NGO Network against Trafficking in Human Beings (KOK). As a network of 42 organisations, including specialised advice centres for victims of human trafficking, the KOK supports the work of its members, represents their interests and expertise in national and European political discourse, engages in prevention and sensitisation measures, and implements research on various aspects of the phenomenon of human trafficking.

In October 2021, the KOK published its second report on data collection in the context of trafficking in human beings and exploitation in Germany. The report contains a first evaluation of the KOK data tool with over 700 cases of human trafficking and exploitation that have been registered at specialised counselling centres. While the data compiled in the annual situation report on trafficking and exploitation published by the Federal criminal police office focuses on cases of human trafficking that have entailed a criminal investigation, the data compiled in the report published by the KOK focuses on those cases that have been registered at specialised counselling centres – including those where no criminal investigation was conducted. In comparison, the two reports show clear discrepancies – for example with regard to the main countries of origin of the victims - which implies that specialised counselling centres are in touch with and have knowledge of cases that are not directly visible to the authorities. This underlines the important role of the data available to civil society organisations in drawing a clear picture of the phenomenon of human trafficking and the impact of measures aimed at combatting human trafficking in Germany. The KOK report is available online in English: <https://www.kok-gegen-menschenhandel.de/en/news/kok-news/new-kok-report-on-human-trafficking-and-exploitation-in-germany-bundles-data-from-specialised-counselling-centres-for-the-first-time> .

From August-December 2022, the BMFSFJ provides funding for a special project by the KOK aimed at ensuring continued prevention and protection for refugees from Ukraine. The KOK will produce various best-practice publications and recommendations for policy makers and practitioners and will engage in intensified measures to sensitise volunteers working with refugees. The challenges linked to the goal of ensuring prevention and protection from human trafficking for persons fleeing the Ukraine will continue to be a point of major concern for all actors involved.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

There have been no pertinent legislative changes in the relevant reporting period nor are such changes planned. Equal access of women to judicial legal protection is guaranteed in German procedural law without discrimination.

Under German criminal procedural law, an accused may avail him- or herself of the assistance of defence counsel at any stage of the proceedings irrespective of gender. Moreover, all the accused have equal access to court-appointed defence counsel in those cases in which this is deemed mandatory under national law with respect to the interests of justice.

However, in light of the presumption of innocence, the requirements with respect to the burden of proof must remain high in criminal procedural law. Moreover, groups and civil society organisations that are not potential victims cannot become parties to criminal proceedings. Such a participation is alien to German law of criminal procedure and it potentially bears the danger to compromise the rights of the accused. Victims, on the other hand, have the right to join the proceedings as a private

accessory prosecutor where the accusation concerns certain unlawful acts, such as serious violent offences or - in case the accusation concerns other offences - where it is for specific reasons deemed necessary to safeguard the victim's interests. Moreover, in order to ensure a high level of quality, victims can make use of legal assistance, and victim protection organisations are free to accompany victims in proceedings.

3.3 Institutional changes

The percentage of women is still growing in all parts of justice, from passed exams to lawyers, prosecutors and judges. In 2020 about 48% of judges and 51% of prosecutors were women; while only 35% of the lawyers. On the other hand, at the same time more than 55% of the students who passed their second state exam were women. This can be expected to be reflected in a further increase of the percentage of females in the numbers of lawyers, prosecutors and judges in the next years.

(data for the period 2021 and 2022 are currently not available)

3.5 Other pertinent developments.

The German Ministry of Justice is planning a symposium for October 2022, addressing the implications of psychotherapy for a victim's credibility in court. The interaction of therapy and credibility is particularly important in cases of crimes against sexual self-determination where the victim might urgently need therapeutical assistance and at the same time the victim's statement is the only proof available.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

On 16 March 2022, the German Bundestag, on request of the parliamentary groups of SPD, Alliance 90/The Greens and FDP (20/1023) decided to set up a commission to reform electoral law and modernise parliamentary work.

In particular, it is the task of the commission to deal with measures to effectively make the Bundestag smaller, aiming at achieving the legal standard size. Moreover, the commission is to draft recommendations, among others to achieve a balanced representation of women and men in the German Bundestag. On 30 August, an interim report was presented stating that in the second half of 2022, the commission would again deal with the low percentage of women in parliament and with proposals in line with the constitution to ensure a balanced representation.

4.2 Policy changes

EAF "Action Programme Municipality –Women into Politics"

Since mid-2021, in close co-ordination with the German Countrywomen's Association (Deutscher Landfrauenverband (dlv)), the European Academy for Women in Politics and Business (EAF Berlin) has conducted an action programme aiming at sustainably increasing the share of women in local representations (municipal, town, county councils) as well as the share of paid and voluntary female mayors and female heads of district authorities. It focuses not only on women but also aims at contributing to initiating structural changes that can have a positive effect on the participation of women and the acceptance and attractiveness of local politics as a whole. The overarching objective is to win and support women in predominantly rural regions as the current share of women in local councils and parliaments in Germany is only 27% on average. Among mayors the share of women is only 9%.

During the term of four years in total there will be two programme runs with ten selected regions per run. Interested regions (e.g., one or two districts or a district in co-operation with cities that do not form part of a district) can apply and will be selected by an expert body – under the auspices of

the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ). The BMFSFJ will provide funding of 1.7 million Euro to the action programme until December 2024, which amounts to up to 500,000 Euro per year.

The German Association of Towns and Municipalities is another important co-operation partner. The BMFSFJ works with the association mainly when it comes to recruiting, supporting and networking female mayors. In September 2022, the second nationwide women's congress took place focusing primarily on female mayors and their deputies. The event served to encourage more women to take up decision-making positions in politics, to help them become networked and to increase the visibility of the many active women who are already working with dedication to make their cities, towns and municipalities better places to live. This congress was organised jointly by the German Association of Cities and Municipalities, the Lower Saxony Association of Cities and Municipalities, the Lower Saxony Association of Cities and Towns, EAF Berlin (European Academy for Women in Politics and Business) and the German Countrywomen's Association, with the support of the BMFSFJ.

4.3 Institutional changes .

The Federal Act on Appointment to Bodies (Bundesgremienbesetzungsgesetz, BGremBG) of 2015 was revised with the entry into force of the Act to Expand and Modify the Regulations for the Equal Participation of Women and Men in Leadership Positions in the Private and Public Sectors (FüPoG II) on 12 August 2021. The aim of the act is to promote the equal participation of women and men in bodies to which the Federal Government may appoint members. The revised provisions apply to all supervisory bodies and main bodies to which the Federal Government appoints two or more members. The Federal Government has to meet the parity requirement for its 2,712 members in a total of 586 bodies.

Every year as of 31 December, the federal institutions record the composition of the boards and report it to the Federal Statistical Office, which prepares overall body statistics on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

The statistics are included in the annual information provided by the Federal Government on the development of the share of women and men in executive positions and private and public sector bodies. The sixth annual information will be published this year and provide details on the composition of the main and supervisory bodies as of 31 December 2020 and on the changes compared with 31 December 2019.

Since the first board statistics were published as of 31 December 2017, there has been a very satisfactory development in the proportion of women among the members appointed by the federal government to boards to which the provisions of the BGremBG apply.

As of 31 Dec. 2017	42.4%
As of 31 Dec. 2018	45.4%
As of 31 Dec. 2019	46.4%
As of 31 Dec. 2020	48.1%.

The aim of achieving gender parity within these boards is within realistic reach.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Helene Weber College

The increase of the number of women in parliaments is the objective of the Helen Weber College (HWK) which is funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth. The provider of the project by the HWK is the European Academy for Women in Politics and Economy Berlin e.V. (EAF).

Current examples:

1. Helene Weber Award

With the Helene Weber Award- awarded four times so far (last on 8 September 2020) - extraordinary local policymakers are honoured for their achievements. The prize is associated with concrete funding for each and every prize winner. In addition to awarding 10,000 euros in prize money to the main prize winner, all prize winners receive individual coaching to help them advance their political career as well as training and support in building their network. The prize winners are role models in the HWK and at the same time ambassadors in favour of increasing the number of women in local politics. The Helene Weber Prize for 2024 is currently in preparation.

2. Local policy empowerment programme for female students

In a joint project with the European University Viadrina, the University Leipzig, the university alliance Ruhr (alliance between the University of Duisburg-Essen, Ruhr University Bochum and TU Dortmund University) and the cities of Bochum, Dortmund and Essen politically interested and committed female students are familiarised with local policy structures and shown possibilities to participate and make a change. Those female students get motivation and support for their political commitment at local level.

3. “Diversity in Politics!” mentoring programme

People with a migrant background account for 26% of the German population, but they are significantly underrepresented at all levels of politics. However, especially women with a migrant background can contribute to a diverse party landscape and act as important role models. The “Diversity in Politics” mentoring programme is funded by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth and is conducted for the second time in autumn 2021 by the EAF Berlin. The programme supports women with a migrant background on their path to achieve a political mandate and aims at actively and sustainably promoting diversity at all political levels.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.4 Research and awareness raising.

With the federal initiative “Refugee Protection in Accommodation Centres”, the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, together with UNICEF and a broad alliance of partner organisations, has been working to protect women, children and other vulnerable people in refugee accommodation centres. The initiative’s main objective is to establish effective violence prevention plans for those affected by violence. To this end, the members of the federal initiative issued uniform nationwide “minimum standards for the protection of children, adolescents and women in refugee accommodation centres” in 2016. These standards contain guidelines for preparing, implementing and monitoring centre-specific prevention plans. The guidelines are revised on a regular basis to take current practical experience into account. The “minimum standards” were last updated in 2021 in their 4th edition taking account of new legal provisions and current political developments. The federal initiative “Protection of Refugees in Refugee Accommodation Centres” supports a variety of projects in the 2021/2022 funding period to support the implementation of the minimum standards and to support the obligation to prevent violence in refugee accommodation centres as set out in the German Asylum Act since 2019 (see section 44 (2a) and section 53 (3) of the Asylum Act). These projects include a pilot project to develop and test concepts for identifying particular vulnerabilities in refugee shelters (e.g. Identifying refugees

affected by human trafficking) and a project to improve access to child and youth services for refugee families in shelters.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

The implementation status of the cross-departmental gender equality strategy has been surveyed. The concept for an update is work in progress.

The Federal Government has updated the handbook for impact assessments of gender equality, implemented it in the electronic legislative workflow and notified all ministries to use the revised handbook. The Federal Government has been commissioned to develop a gender equality check and intends to enforce the universal application of gender impact assessment through support and monitoring.

6.3 Institutional changes

The “Bundesstiftung Gleichstellung” (Federal Foundation for Gender Equality) is in an establishment phase: Employees have been hired, a property was found and the network of partners and interested people grows continuously.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Research on the practical implementation, capacity building and enforcement of impact assessments of gender equality is currently being funded.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

Gender Mainstreaming is mandatory for all political, legislative and non-legislative measures. The government handbook for impact assessments of gender equality has been revised and published, accompanied by notification of all ministries.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

To reach as many people as possible to recognise the importance of taking action to combat gender stereotypes (regarding points 1.3 and 1.4), it is important to raise awareness of this issue as widely as possible. In a pandemic, for example, this awareness work can be carried out also via digital workshops that are specifically addressed to teachers and companies as well as institutions.

8. Additional comments, if any

Our Ministry (Division 414) would like to engage in a dialogue with other member states with experience in this area to set up an alliance against sexism and sexual harassment.

Greece

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative

- ❖ [Law 4957/2022](#) on higher education defines violation of the principle of equality, equal rights and equal treatment and opportunities and acts offending the sexual freedom, the sexual dignity of another person, acts of economic exploitation of sexual life, sexual harassment, as well as acts involving discrimination on the basis of –inter alia- sex, sexual orientation, identity or gender characteristics, which are characterised as disciplinary misconducts.

It also provides for the establishment of a “Gender Equality and Anti-discrimination Committee” as an advisory body at each university. The Committee will contribute –among others- to the prevention and combating all forms of discrimination, sexism, sexual harassment and all forms of harassment in the institution.

1.2 Policy changes

- ❖ The [National Strategy and the Action Plan for Roma’s Social Inclusion 2021-2030](#) was presented in December 2021. The National Strategy is structured around four pillars (preventing and combating Roma’s poverty and social inclusion, enhancing Roma’s equal access to basic services and goods, preventing and combating stereotypes and discrimination against Roma, promoting Roma’s active participation in social, economic and political life) and Roma women are among the groups for which special emphasis will be given. Specific operational objectives targeting Roma women are the reduction of gender employment gap and the enhancement of their active participation in social life.
- ❖ The [Greek Innovation Lab for Women #GIL4W](#) was inaugurated in February 2022. It aspires to implement programmes and activities (such as providing opportunities for funding and business support for the innovative start-ups of women, strengthening STEM in education, or motivating young girls to choose professions related to new highly specialised fields. Thus #GIL4W will contribute to the deconstruction of gender stereotypes prevailing at STEM and ICT sectors and address negative statistics and trends regarding women’s involvement in the aforementioned fields.
- ❖ The “[R&I PEERS](#)” [project](#) aiming to create and validate pilot experiences that disrupt gender-biased approaches and unconscious rules which limit participation by and careers for women in Research and Innovation has been complete.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

- ❖ The [Structures \(Counselling Centres, Shelters\) of GSDFPGE’s Network](#) have been collaborating with public and private stakeholders (e.g. municipalities, school units, media) in carrying out a variety of information and awareness-raising activities to deconstruct gender stereotypes and biases (e.g. online workshops and training, radio shows, videos).
- ❖ The <https://metoogreece.gr/> web platform, a government platform which includes all the hotlines for immediate help and support as well as information on the forms/manifestations of gender-based violence, has been upgraded.
- ❖ From November 2021 to June 2022, KETHI carried out a pilot implementation of the educational programme “Awareness and sensitisation of teachers and students on issues of gender violence, discrimination and gender equality” in secondary schools. The book “The World Anew” and the manual for its educational use (resulting from a collaboration between UNICEF and KETHI) were used and each participating class spent two teaching hours.
- ❖ In October 2022 the GSDFPGE launched a new campaign on combating sexism in society. The campaign consisted of three spots addressing sexism at workplace, at school and in private life.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

- ❖ The Ministry of Interior in co-operation with the National Transparency Authority and after consultation with the Greek Ombudsman developed the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for Public Sector Employees that –inter alia- seeks to prevent and combat sexism at workplace.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

- ❖ Article 38 of [Law 4947/2022](#) amends the Penal Code by adding Article 346 “Revenge porn”. The aforementioned article describes the offence and defines minimum and/or maximum penalties.
- ❖ In November 2021, the [Law 4855/2021](#) amending the Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code was published. It toughens the punishments for offences against sexual freedom and economic exploitation of sexual life, especially when committed against minors or people incapable of resisting. It also stipulates that violation of sexual dignity in the workplace and violation of sexual dignity against minors will be prosecuted ex officio.
- ❖ In November 2021, [M.D. 82063/1.11.2021](#) which provides specific guidelines as well as relevant policy models regarding the in-house policies i) to combat violence and harassment and ii) to manage internal complaints, pursuant to Law 4801/2022. [Circular 18547/25.2.2022](#) of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs provides specifications on the procedure of approval of regulations on the prevention and addressing violence and harassment at work.
- ❖ The Prosecutor of the Supreme Court issued the [12/2021 circular](#) addressing the country's prosecutors and providing them with instructions on how to implement existing legislation in conjunction with the commitments of the Istanbul Convention.
- ❖ On legislative changes regarding higher education please see Box 1.1.

2.2 Policy changes

- ❖ A delegation of the Council of Europe's Group of Experts (GRETA) visited Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras and Amaliada, in the framework of the [Second Periodic Evaluation of Greece](#) regarding the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The GSDFPGE provided information on the type of assistance available to victims of TIH, the available Structures, the funding resources, the specific measures taken to support the social integration of human trafficking victims, including access to employment and education.
- ❖ The executive summary of the report [“Programmatic Review of Services available and accessible to Children in the Shelters of the Network of the GSDFPGE”](#) was delivered by the Institute of Child Health.
- ❖ The operation of the [GSDFPGE's integrated Network of Structures](#) for preventing and combating violence against women continues. Nowadays, the network consists of 44 Counselling Centres, 19 Women's Shelters and the bilingual SOS 15900 helpline, a nationwide telephone free of cost line that provides immediate assistance in emergency cases on a 24-hour basis (in Greek and English), all year long.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Research

- ❖ The “Programmatic Review of Services available and accessible to Children in the shelters of the Network of the GSDFPGE”, carried out by the Institute of Child Health in the framework of the co-operation between GSDFPGE and UNICEF Office in Greece, was completed. Its findings will guide the design of actions towards to promote adoption of a child-centred approach as part of the upgrading of the Network’s services.
- ❖ A study on the perpetrators of domestic violence based on data from therapeutic programmes provided to the perpetrators of domestic violence through the criminal mediation process is being carried out by Noisis Development Consultants and the Centre of European Constitutional Law.
- ❖ A Study on the “Design of an integrated system for managing the complaints of sexual harassment, abuse and domestic violence in Greece” was carried out in the framework of the establishment of the governmental specialized e-platform <https://metoogreece.gr>
- ❖ The first National Report on the Monitoring of the Istanbul Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was submitted to the GREVIO Group of Independent Experts of the Council of Europe in March 2022.
- ❖ Research was conducted and a national report was published under the “Teamwork”, a project co-funded by the EU, aiming at strengthening the combat against sexual harassment in the workplace in Greece, Bulgaria, Italy and Spain.
- ❖ A nationwide research entitled “It’s not part of our work” was carried out by NGO “Action Aid” to examine the prevalence of sexual harassment at workplace in the private sector and specifically in the tourism, catering and hospitality industries.
- ❖ “Koinoniko Polykentro”, the research and training institute of the Greek Civil Service Confederation (ADEDY), published a study on the sexual harassment at the workplace in the public sector. Subsequently, a Guide for dealing with sexual harassment in the public sector was issued.

Development of Tools and Guides

- ❖ The development of the “Risk Assessment Tool” for women victims of gender based violence and domestic violence has entered the evaluation phase, after its six-month pilot implementation. The tool, based on the Structured Professional Judgement approach, will be applied and utilized horizontally by all the reception services of women victims of gender based and domestic violence (such as the Police, Health Care services and Justice System) to assess the level of risk of lethal violence or/and of recurrence of violence in their narrow environment, as well as the gravity of the situation.
- ❖ The “Panic Button” application was launched in November 2022, as a result of the cooperation between the GSDFPGE, the Ministry of Citizen Protection, the Ministry of Digital Governance and Vodafone Greece. The app allows a woman in danger to call for help by pressing a button on her mobile phone so that the police are able to locate them and intervene immediately. Initially, the application will be piloted for a year in Athens and Thessaloniki.
- ❖ Under the co-operation of the GSDFPGE and UNICEF office in Greece the digital application “GBV Pocket Guide” has been adapted and translated into Greek.
- ❖ The Centre of Gender Studies of Panteion University participated in European co-funded project ASTRAPI - Active strategies for the prevention and response to sexual harassment in universities. Under this project a scientific policy document, an Educational Handbook for the Prevention and Handling of Sexual Harassment at Work and a European toolkit for the effective prevention and handling of sexual harassment at work were developed.
- ❖ The Hellenic Federation of Enterprises working group on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion has created a Guide for businesses entitled “Harassment and Violence at Work: Measures and Regulations of Law 4808/21” as well as a relevant brochure in the form of Questions and Answers (Q & A).

- ❖ In March 2022, KETHI published the “Training manual: Violence and harassment in the world of work.”

Awareness-raising activities

- ❖ The Structures of GSDFPGE’s Network have been organised or co-organised a variety of awareness-raising activities (e.g., Open days on the occasion of the International Women’s Day, workshops, exhibitions) on the issue of gender-based violence throughout Greece.
- ❖ The Observatory for Gender Equality, responsible for the collection and publication of statistics on all forms of violence under article 11 of the Convention, publishes for the third consecutive year relevant e-bulletins^{4,5}.
- ❖ On the occasion of 25 November 2022, the 3rd Annual Report on Violence against Women was published. A special event was organised with the presence of the President of the Hellenic Republic and the Prime Minister, presenting the comprehensive set of policies on gender-based violence. Moreover a campaign with the slogan “Never too soon, never too late to speak out” was launched aiming at motivating to react to incidents of gender-based violence addressing the competent services.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.3 Institutional changes

Law 4604/2019 on substantive gender equality explicitly provides for the establishment of Municipal and Regional Committees for Gender Equality with specific competences in the 332 Greek municipalities and 13 regions respectively. During the reference period 10 Municipal Committees for Gender Equality have been established⁶. The central responsibility of these Committees is to take into consideration the National Action Plan for Gender Equality, participate and support the integration of gender equality perspective into the local and regional policies, propose and participate in the preparation of gender equality action plans at local and regional level.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

- ❖ Ministerial Decision 131035/04.03.2022 activates the Presidential Decree 80/2006 and providing for a twelve-month period of temporarily protection to the people displaced from Ukraine on 24 February 2022 or later. According to the UN Agency in Greece, women and children are the majority of refugees arriving from Ukraine.

5.2 Policy changes

- ❖ In February 2022, the GSDFPGE, the UNHCR and the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI), signed a Memorandum of Co-operation aiming to ensure that the needs of refugee women and girls are included in the National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025.
- ❖ The GSDFPGE has set its network of structures on supporting victims or potential victims of violence against women available to Ukrainian women fleeing to Greece. To this end, a cultural mediator of Ukrainian origin has been recruited to provide interpretation (in Ukrainian and Russian language) and escort to Ukrainian refugee women supported by the GSDFPGE Network of Structures as well as to facilitate awareness raising activities and focus group discussions.
- ❖ The GSDFPGE also launched an information campaign targeting Ukrainian women and informing them of the available support services. For this purpose, a pamphlet with the title

⁴<https://isotita.gr/6th-quarterly-newsletter-report-gsfpge-october-21-december-2021/>

⁵ <https://isotita.gr/7th-newsletter-report-jan-march-2022/>

⁶ Overall, 321 out of 332 Municipalities and 9 out of 13 Regions have respectively established Municipal and Regional Committees for Gender Equality.

“We are here for you” translated in three languages (English, Ukrainian and Russian) has been distributed. It also includes a QR code that links to the website “www.womensos.gr” and a list of Counselling Centres.

- ❖ The Gender-Based Violence Working Group, chaired by UNHCR and co-chaired by the GSDFPGE dedicated its meeting held in March 2022 to the current situation in Ukraine. A representative from the Ministry of Migration and Asylum contributed by presenting governmental work related to the issue, while the representative of the Community of Ukrainian Women in Greece attended and focused on the needs of the displaced Ukrainian women in Greece.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

- ❖ A study mapping women and girls with disability in refugee and asylum seekers population has been conducted by National Centre for Social Research (EKKE) on behalf of the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI)⁷ in 2022.
- ❖ In December 2022, the GSDFPGE in collaboration with KETHI and UNHCR, organised two-day seminars on gender-based violence and abusive behaviour. The seminars are targeted to employees of state agencies providing services to migrant and refugee populations and employees of municipal social services.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

- ❖ Law 4957/2022 on the operation of Higher Educational Institutions, upgrades the role of the University Gender Equality Committees (already established since 2019) and strengthens and widens their competencies, with the inclusion of issues of discrimination or harassment.

6.2 Policy changes:

- ❖ The National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025 has been announced in December 2021. Its Priority Axes, reflecting the main priorities of the Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2023 and of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, are the following:
 - P.A. 1: Preventing and combating gender-based violence and domestic violence
 - P.A. 2: Equal participation of women in the labour market
 - P.A. 3: Equal participation of women in decision making/leadership
 - P.A. 4: Gender mainstreaming in sectoral policies (education, public administration, health, culture, sports etc).
- ❖ The GSDFPGE’s proposal for a project entitled “Gender mainstreaming in public policy and budget processes” under the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) 2022 has been approved. It is a flagship technical support project that will provide capacity development on the latest trends, methodologies and tools for gender mainstreaming. In particular, this technical support will in the short-term result in general and tailored recommendations for the best policy actions and processes to achieve effective Gender Impact Assessments of relevant policies, legislation and budgeting in the participating beneficiary Member States. The project will be implemented in two phases:
 - In the first phase (Module 1), an initial study will be carried out by experts to assess the situation regarding Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) and Gender Budgeting (GB) tools worldwide and in particular in the EU and the participating countries. In addition, training material will be developed and civil servants will be given the opportunity to be trained on these issues through the exchange of experiences and good practices.

⁷ The Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI) is a Legal Entity under Private Law of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, supervised by the GSDFPGE.

- In the second phase (Module 2) a specific study will be carried out to assess the situation in Greece. The study will highlight the opportunities and challenges for the country on the GIA and GB issues and will define the objectives and the priorities that will form the basis for further actions. It will also include the creation of training material, the training of ministry officials and the implementation of pilot programmes on GIA and GB in the Ministries of Finance, Labour and Social Affairs and Interior. The project will be completed in 2024.
- ❖ The pilot implementation phase of the “Nannies of the Neighbourhood” project, a flagship initiative designed to support parents/guardians to take care of their babies, aged from 2 months to about 2.5 years by giving them access to accredited caregivers, has started in 33 Municipalities. Six hundred and twenty-one (621) caregiver applications have been submitted across the country, whereas the application process for the beneficiaries will be launched at the third trimester of 2022.
- ❖ Law 4920/2022 set the institutional framework for the project “Childcare Units within large companies”, which will fund 120 companies employing at least 100 employees so that they create childcare units for workers’ children aged from 6 months to 2,5 years.
- ❖ A proposal entitled “Social inclusion and empowerment of Roma” has been submitted by a partnership to which the GSDFPGE participates (along with Research Centre for Gender Equality and NGO Reuma) under the Call for proposals under the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism (EEA Financial Mechanism) for the period 2014-2021 and it is under evaluation. The project -inter alias- will provide for the implementation of two sub-actions included in NAPGE) 2021-2025. Specifically:
 - Co-operation of the GSDFPGE’s Network of Structures and Municipalities’ Roma Branches of Community Centres in the referral of gender-based violence or/and domestic violence cases.
 - Training of the Network’s staff on providing their services to Roma women.
- ❖ On 8 December, the Public Employment Service-DYPA launched an employment programme targeting unemployed people facing obstacles to their integration or reintegration in the labour market. Women survivors of gender-based violence are among the beneficiaries of the programme’s first cycle that targets socially vulnerable groups, whereas mothers trying to re-enter into labour market are included to the second cycle. Moreover, a Memorandum of Cooperation signed between DYPA and Huawei provides for the training of 500 unemployed women in digital skills.

6.3 Institutional changes

In December 2022, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between KETHI and the Harokopio University of Athens⁸

⁸ It is a public university dedicated to promoting research and learning in a small, well focused set of intellectual areas (Environment, Geography and Applied Economics, Digital Technology, Health Science and Education). It was first established in 1929 and gained the status of University in 1990.

6.4 Research and awareness-

- ❖ The project “Promoting work-life balance in companies and a better sharing of care between men and women - SHARE” has been completed. In February 2022, eighteen (18) companies awarded the “Equality Label”. Nevertheless, a helpdesk has been set up in order to provide further and continuous support to the enterprises interested.
A ministerial decision on the specification and the implementation of the Laws 4604/2019 and 4837/2021 (legislation regarding the establishment of the “Diversity Label⁹” is expected to be issued.
- ❖ In 2022, a report entitled “Empowering women in the transition towards green growth in Greece” was conducted by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in co-operation with the GSDFPGE. This report observes the gender-environment nexus in the Greek policy framework and assesses environmental and climate policies through a gender lens, and gender equality policies through an environmental lens. It focuses mainly on policies and measures that could support women’s economic empowerment in environment-related sectors, women’s environmental leadership and decision making, and mainstreaming gender equality and environmental sustainability in policy tools and proposes a series of recommendations.
- ❖ A research on the situation of women with disabilities and the needs of children’s with disabilities parents and guardians was conducted by the National Centre for Social Research on behalf of the KETHI. It includes specific studies on Roma women with disabilities and refugee/asylum seeker women with disabilities.
- ❖ During the reference period the Observatory for Gender Equality produced 2 e-bulletins diffusing information on the following topics:
 - Work-related accidents and health problems
 - Women and gendered segregation in education

⁹ Law 4837/2021 on the strengthening of social protection expanded the “Gender Equality Label”, granted to public and private companies distinguished for implementing gender equality policies in workplace, into “Diversity Label” awarding the enhancement of equal treatment and anti-discrimination policies.

Hungary

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

As provided for in Article XV (2) and (3) of the Fundamental Law of Hungary, the Hungarian substantive and procedural criminal law and the jurisprudence developed on the basis of it ensure the consistent prosecution and sanctioning of crimes against women. Women involved in criminal proceedings are entitled without discrimination to all the rights, including the right to appeal against decisions of authorities, which the law guarantees them in their actual status in criminal proceedings.

Between November 2021 and December 2022, no legislative changes were made in relation to the prohibition of sexist acts or the criminalisation of sexist hate speech. There were no essential changes in the case law on gender-based offences. The system of legal remedies for victims of such acts has remained unchanged.

1.2 Policy changes

Pursuant to Section 5 (2) of Instruction No. 27/2013 (XII. 21.) LU on equal opportunities (hereinafter: Ut.), the Prosecutor General shall appoint an equal opportunities officer, who, in case the principle of equal treatment is infringed, shall be obliged to take the measures provided for in the Ut. In the reporting period, between November 2021 and 2022, the designated Equal Opportunities Officer (currently the Head of Division for Administrative and Environment Protection Cases at the Department for the Protection of Public Interest of the Office of the Prosecutor General) was not approached by any prosecution employee for an infringement of the Ut.

According to Section 6 a) and b) of the Ut., the equal opportunities officer shall annually review the compliance with the provisions of Section 4 of the Ut. governing the employer's measures promoting equal opportunities and shall submit an equal opportunities report to the Prosecutor General by 31 March.

The equal opportunities report prepared by the equal opportunities officer for the year 2021 states that the persons exercising the employer's powers have taken into account the requirements of Act CXXV of 2003 on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunities as well as requirements of the Ut., and the implementation of equal opportunities was promoted by employer measures provided for in Section 4 of the Ut. For example, in 2021, a number of prosecution employees who were on unpaid maternity or childcare leave participated in training courses initiated by the employees themselves to provide them with the professional skills necessary for their job.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Shortly before the start of the reporting period - on 8 July 2021 - Act LXXIX of 2021 on stricter actions against paedophile offenders and amending certain acts to protect children entered into force. As a result of the amendment, any person who has been sentenced to an executable term of imprisonment for a violent crime committed against his or her family member and punishable by imprisonment of eight years or more may not be released on parole under Article 38(5) of Act C of 2012 on the Criminal Code (hereinafter: CC).

In the reporting period, the amendment to the law has led to a tightening of case law, in line with the legislator's intention.

Chapter XIV of Act XC of 2017 on Criminal Procedure Code (hereinafter: CPC) provides a wide range of possibilities to reduce and eliminate the burden and possible risks of participation in the procedure for persons requiring special treatment. Pursuant to Article 82 c) of the CPC, a victim of a crime against sexual freedom and sexual offences, who is typically a woman, is considered a person requiring special treatment without a special decision. The Office of the Prosecutor General has issued several general guidelines for the Prosecution Service in relation to trafficking in human beings, which is most often committed against women.

When applying the law, prosecutors constantly monitor investigations supervised/controlled by them, including investigations into crimes committed against women, and within the framework of such monitoring they take measures justified by the particularities of the given case, including the choosing of the type and extent of the legal sanctions.

Act CVIII of 2020 on the revision of certain laws to increase the protection of victims of violent crimes committed against family members, modified, inter alia, Act CCXL of 2013 on the execution of punishments, criminal measures, certain coercive measures and confinement for administrative offences as of 5 November 2020, Section 188 (2a) c) of which sets forth as a requirement that for the initiation of parole, the opinion of the guardianship authority needs to be obtained regarding the convict's minor aged child.

For the execution of the legal provisions, Government Decree 10/2021. (I. 20.) on the modification of certain government decrees regulating child protection issues (hereinafter: "Mód.r.") enacted Section 9/A of Government Decree 149/1997. (IX. 10.) on guardianship authorities, child protection and guardianship procedures (hereinafter: "Gyer"). This Section has been effective as of 23 January 2021 and provides for the guardianship authority's opinion made to protect the convict's minor-aged child.

Furthermore, Mód.r. supplemented Section 27 (4b) of Gyer, which stipulates that no institutions responsible for children's protection and welfare should be designated as places for the exercise of supervised parents' visitation rights which are covered by the scope of the restraining order issued by the court as a coercive measure in accordance with Section 280 of CPC, or which are covered by the scope or the restraining order issued by the court or the prosecutor in accordance with Section 71 (2) b) of the CC. Pursuant to Section 27 (4c) of Gyer, which is also a supplemented legal provision, upon proposal of the service provider that ensures the appropriate exercise of supervised parents' visitation rights, the guardianship authority reviews the exercise of the supervised parents' visitation rights. As a result of that review, to protect the interests of the child, the guardianship authority can decide, inter alia, to restrict, revoke the visitation rights or to change the location where the right can be exercised.

According to Section 4 (184) of Act V of 2013 on the Civil Code, in the interest of the child the guardianship authority or - in a lawsuit for the settlement of marital or parental custody - the court may restrict or revoke the visitation rights of the parent or other persons who are entitled to such rights and commit wrongful acts imputable to them.

In view of the above-mentioned provisions, based on its power to initiate proceedings according to Section 5 (1) of Act CLXIII of 2011 on the Prosecution Service (hereinafter: Ütv.) the administrative professional branch of the Prosecution Service can initiate the restriction or revocation of parents' visitation rights at the guardianship authority.

In connection with the Hungarian judicial system, it is important to mention that the enforcement of resolutions relating to visitation rights may be initiated at the court with jurisdiction over the place of residence of the child instead of the guardianship authority as of 1 March 2020. Under the co-ordination of the National Office for the Judiciary (from herein: NOJ), judges and court staff started

preparing for the transition and to provide high-quality service to justice-seeking citizens after the law had come into force.

Compared to the previous proceedings, the application – to be filed with the court – is more detailed and precise: it must include personal information of the custodial and non-custodial parent, the child, the name of the court or guardianship authority that regulated the visitation, the number of the case file, a description of what was in breach of the rules of visitation and a request for enforcing the resolution.

Considering the circumstances of the case and the best interest of the child, the court may apply several sanctions against the person who breached the rules of visitation. They may turn to the guardian authority to facilitate compliance with the rules of visitation, but they may also request to change the rights of custody or place the child with a third party. In addition, the court may impose fines; and in the case of a recurring, serious breach of the rules, they may request assistance from the police at the time of delivery of the child. They may file a report for endangering a minor or obstructing the visitation.

2.2 Policy changes

The extended care system for victims of domestic violence and trafficking in human beings, which has been expanded in recent years, has provided assistance in a number of cases, through telephone counselling, placement in crisis centres or in secret shelters, and social reintegration of victims of domestic violence. Policy developments for the coming years were planned during the reporting period.

The priority for the coming period is prevention, including both variants. The policy aims to prevent victimisation through primary prevention and to help as many people as possible who have already shown signs of violence in their relationships and family relations but are not yet in crisis, through secondary prevention.

To this end, the aim is to make the services of the crisis management clinics even more widely available: by strengthening the provision at the county level, the number of crisis management clinics for victims of domestic violence would increase from 7 to 22 (2 crisis management clinics are expected to be opened in Budapest). The crisis management clinics will also have primary prevention functions in the future.

Also, as a preventive intervention, the training of the child protection signalling system will continue. In the current development period (2021-2027) another 5,000 people are being planned to be trained, the target group will now mainly be teachers, kindergarten teachers as well as early childhood educators.

These complex developments are planned to be financed by EU development funds. The EFOP Plus Operational Programme is currently being discussed with the European Commission.

Within the framework of the priority project of the Margit Slachta National Social Policy Institute, the EFOP-1.9.4-VEKOP-16-2016-00001 project named "Renewal of the methodological and information systems of the social sector" the intersectoral working group, which was created to make the operation of the warning system more efficient and to improve the co-operation of the warning system members, started its operation on 1st February 2022. The operation of the working group covers the analysis of the detection and warning system activity created and provided for by Section 17 of Act XXXI of 1997 on the protection of children and guardianship administration and by Section 64 of Act III of 1993 on social administration and social benefits.

As a result of the working group's activities, professional material was prepared with title "Intersectoral co-operation in support of the detection and warning system" on the problems

identified in the areas of detection, warnings and co-operation by the bodies participating in the warning system, such as the Prosecution Service and representatives of various sectors, and the proposed solutions for their management. The material deals in a separate section with the operation of the detection and warning system in the case of domestic abuse and violence between family members and relatives. According to our latest official knowledge, the completed professional material is awaiting ministerial approval.

2.3 Institutional changes

The operation of the 5 new crisis centres, 7 secret shelters, 22 halfway houses and 7 crisis management clinics established in 2018-2019 with EU development funds will be covered by the national central budget from 2022 onwards, with the same level of funding as the EU grant. The resources needed to maintain the expanded care system are included in the national central budget as a base, which means that they will be provided year by year.

Child-centred justice guarantees the effective implementation of the rights of children at the highest level, ensuring age-appropriate treatment and the best interests of the child in all cases involving or affecting them, while providing the judges working with children in legal proceedings with appropriate training. Concerning the above-described objectives, as of 20 May 2020, the President of NOJ has been assisted by the Department on the rights of children to develop the necessary regulations which are in line with the child-friendly justice guidelines by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2021, on the International Day of Violence Against Women, the Hungarian police published a post on the police's official Instagram page with the title "Not your fault".

A methodological guide has been prepared to assist in the preparation and content of prevention programmes targeting young people on the issue of human trafficking.

The summary study of a 2021 research was prepared, which examined the life paths of victims of human trafficking in Hungary and the professional work of the care system assisting and supporting them.

The campaign "Love doesn't hurt!" was continued. The state provided HUF 30 million for the period from 01.08.2021 to 30.06.2022 in terms of the implementation of this campaign. The main objective of the campaign was to emphasise that there are places where victims of domestic violence can turn to for help. The campaign also raised awareness of how anyone can offer support and help as a layperson when they encounter a victim of domestic violence. In parallel, the campaign shared knowledge through a number of channels, the most successful being a series of commercials based on real-life cases, showing a side of domestic violence, which aimed to raise awareness and help victims realise that the abuse they are suffering is not acceptable.

A large-scale, nationally representative survey on domestic violence is underway. The current phase of the research seeks to map the current extent of involvement and how it has changed in recent years.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

In terms of the Government's action plan for the years 2022-2023 [Governmental Decree 1228/2022 (IV. 14.) on the action plan for the period 2022-2023 for the implementation of the national strategy for the fight against trafficking in human beings for the years 2020-2023], a new measure is included for the establishment of a shelter for male victims of trafficking. It was also decided to plan the creation of three new halfway houses.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

The national legal system does not contain special provisions regarding the rules of the burden of proof in order to ensure the fair management and handling of cases related to women.

There is no discernible case of discrimination against women in case law.

3.2 Policy changes

The NOJ does not have statistical data regarding this question.

3.3 Institutional changes

In connection with the Hungarian judicial system, it is important to mention that the courts established and implemented witness support, which operates as a national programme from 2013 onwards. In 2015, the programme was complemented with victim protection, as victims are usually questioned as witnesses during the proceedings.

In 2015, witness care was not only present among the programmes and strategic goals of the NOJ but also appeared as one of the services to be provided by the state to the victim after assessment of and adjusted to his/her needs set out in Act CXXXV of 2005 on Helping the Victims of Crimes and the Mitigation of Damages by the State (hereinafter referred to as: 'Victim Care Act').

Pursuant to Section 4(5) of the Victim Care Act, a witness summoned to a court hearing may turn to a court victim care representative in order to request appropriate information. The court victim care representative is an administrator of the court who provides information in the manner set out in a separate legal act in order to facilitate the giving of testimony and the appearance at the court of necessary to this end. This act raised the institution of witness care to the level of laws and named it as one of the services to be provided by the state, however the courts had – supporting the strategic goals of the President of the NOJ – already made significant efforts prior to that in order to effectively ensure the enforcement of the rights of witnesses and victims and to facilitate the performance without fear of the obligation to bear witness. The facilitation of the obligation to bear witness also promotes the timeliness of the administration of justice.

Lack of information, the unknown generates fear in clients, consequently the national programme focuses on providing wide-range easily comprehensible information to witnesses regarding their procedural rights and options, facilitating the enforcement of their rights, including their rights as victims, without prejudice to impartiality, and facilitating that the witnesses can give testimony without fear.

One element of the sensitive treatment of witnesses is that whenever possible, the courts ensure that the witness can wait and be interviewed at a location separated from the defendant and other participants of the proceedings.

The judiciary organisation assists in the fulfilment of the obligation to bear witness also by striving to provide easily comprehensible and accurate information in the widest scope possible, such as in the summons, websites, customer orientation materials and any posters, media representations and

social networks. In most cases, this wide-range information covers not only the presentation of rights and obligations but also provides practical information to the witnesses.

In addition, it is also our aim to ensure that victims receive professional help that is appropriate to their situation, which requires an information network via which the court employees can refer the victim to the appropriate body. It is not only the regional courts that are committed to the establishment of the victim protection network but also the NOJ, and therefore the NOJ is striving to establish close co-operation with the National Police Headquarters and the partner organisations of the child protection network.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

Between 2018 – 2022, there were numerous judicial training sessions held concerning topics on family law, non-discrimination – equal treatment, victim protection and asylum. 49 of these training sessions were international, organised by different organisations (e.g., EJTN, ERA). Others were either central organised by the NOJ (36 training sessions) or regional (53 training sessions).

In the prosecutorial training and further training programme adopted by the Prosecutor General every year, we pay special attention to compliance with the various EU directives and planned strategies, thus, to ensure equal access to enforce gender equality.

There is no discrimination of any kind, not even gender-based discrimination in the Prosecution Service of Hungary or in the training sessions, as in 2021, for example, we announced two calls for applications for trainee prosecutors, as a result of which the Prosecutor General appointed 52 trainee prosecutors. Out of the 52 persons, the gender ratio is 27 women and 25 men. Both trainees and later on prosecutors are trained in the same way, regardless of sex, and although there is no exact data about the ratio, considering that there are more female employees in the organisation, the proportion of women participating in training is probably higher out of the approx. 2,500 people trained annually.

In our training sessions, we also lay special emphasis on victim protection – which affects women in addition to children the most.

During the 4-day long training of junior prosecutors, we regularly organise lectures with titles “Victims of Human trafficking” and “The classification of human trafficking and the identification of its victims”, but victim protection is given high emphasis specifically in the area of human trafficking itself. Just as crimes against sexual freedom and sexual morality are regularly recurring topics in our various training courses.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

The Hungarian asylum legislation fully complies with the requirement of gender equality.

The asylum authority examines the circumstances of the person concerned individually in connection with each decision. As a result of this examination and data comparison, an individual decision is made, in which the applicant's sex does not play a role.

5.2 Policy changes

As a neighbouring country, many people fled to Hungary to escape the war in Ukraine. Almost immediately, recruiters and pimps appeared at the border crossings. The Family Affairs Departments, in co-operation with the Ministry of Interior, distributed 250,000 bilingual (Hungarian and Ukrainian) leaflets at the border and at major railway stations and airport in the capital. The leaflets contain practical information on how to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of trafficking.

Large posters with the same content as the leaflets also help to inform individuals crossing the border. The information material also provides contact details of the organisation providing assistance.

See also previous answer to 5.1

Based on its competence to control the legality of institutions providing child protection service activities stipulated by Section 29 (7) of the Ütv., the administrative professional branch of the Prosecution Service monitors compliance with the legal provisions regarding the institutions' operation if an infringement of the right of a child in care, thus if a child becomes victim of a crime, comes to its knowledge.

During the reporting period, the Chief Prosecution Office of Pest County, which is responsible for conducting the legality control of the operation of the Unaccompanied Minors' Children's Home of the István Károlyi Children's Centre in Fót - which provides care for unaccompanied minors seeking recognition based on the asylum legislation - and the legality control in case of the violation of the rights of the children under care, did not receive any requests or warnings about a violation/infringement.

5.3 Institutional changes

According to 26 § (1) point g) of the Government Decree No. 301/2007 (XI. 9.) on the implementation of Act LXXX of 2007 on asylum-seeking women and girls, these women and girls are entitled to free of charge pregnancy and maternity care, as well as to interventions aimed at terminating the pregnancy under the conditions specified in the Act on the Protection of Foetal Life.

According to 36/D § paragraph (3) of the government decree men and women in custody must be housed in a separate building or part of a building.

According to 21 § (1) point c) of the government decree as part of the accommodation and care provided at the reception centre, the asylum seeker must be provided with dining and toilet facilities for personal use, or hygiene allowance and clothing of equivalent value.

According to 3 § (1) point b) of the Justice and Law Enforcement Minister Decree No. 52/2007 (XII. 11.) on the institutional system of asylum the person placed at the reception centre must be provided with a hygiene package corresponding to her basic hygiene needs, or a hygiene contribution of the same value.

Based on its competence to control the legality of institutions providing child protection service activities stipulated by Section 29 (7) of the Ütv., the administrative professional branch of the Prosecution Service monitors compliance with the legal provisions regarding the institutions' operation if an infringement of the right of a child in care, thus if a child becomes victim of a crime, comes to its knowledge.

During the reporting period, the Chief Prosecution Office of Pest County, which is responsible for conducting the legality control of the operation of the Unaccompanied Minors' Children's Home of the István Károlyi Children's Centre in Fót - which provides care for unaccompanied minors seeking recognition based on the asylum legislation - and the legality control in case of the violation of the rights of the children under care, did not receive any requests or warnings about a violation/infringement.

No changes have been made regarding the detention of asylum-seeking women concerning the provision of special detention facilities and equipment to meet women's hygiene needs, and the employment of female guards and caregivers.

Since November 2021, the beginning of the reporting period affected by the questionnaire, there was no modification of relevant rules regarding the IRM (Ministry of Justice and Public Administration) Decree of 27/2007 (31 May) on the rules for the execution of the detention ordered in the immigration police procedure; furthermore similarly there were no modifications relating to the BM (Ministry of Interior) Decree of 39/2019 (15 November), which regulates the institution for the implementation of asylum detention maintained by the immigration enforcement body on the receiving station and community accommodation, and the public health requirements for the guarded accommodation maintained by the police, for the execution of the detention ordered in the immigration procedure, the public health inspections, and the procedure for co-operation with the state health administration body.

In terms of the Government's action plan for the years 2022-2023 [Governmental Decree 1228/2022 (IV. 14.) on the action plan for the period 2022-2023 for the implementation of the national strategy for the fight against trafficking in human beings for the years 2020-2023], a new measure is included for the establishment of a shelter for male victims of trafficking. It was also decided to plan the creation of three new halfway houses.

5.4 Research and awareness raising.

The National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing has no information on this issue.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

The National Directorate-General for Aliens Policing has no information on this issue.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

Day care of children

During the 2021-2022 waves of Covid-19, nursery care settings continued to operate, with temporary on-site closures of facilities and services only in the event of specific epidemiological measures (closure of a setting or group). The legal provisions allowing workplace childcare services during the emergency were in force until 31 May of 2022.

It is important for families with young children to be able to plan their long-term return to the labour market from the moment they have children. The complex development of nursery care with EU and national funding, which also has an impact on the growth of female employment, continued during the reference period of the report. The reform of the nursery care network is being implemented with the planned use of RRF, TOP Plus, EFOP Plus, DIMOP Plus and national funds, among others. The aim of the improvements is to expand the conditions for early childhood education in order to reduce social inequalities and increase employment prospects for parents.

Within the framework of the nursery development program, the Government has set the goal of implementing a network of nursery care settings in Hungary that responds to the needs of parents who request it. As a result, compared to 2010, by July 2022, there were already 75% more places providing nursery care. Additionally, care was provided in almost three times more settlements. Accordingly, it makes care available to 20% of children under 3 years of age (in Hungary, 99,7% of children in nursery care are over 1 year old, so for their age group, the rate is already close to 30%).

In the area of day-care provision for young children, the following relevant new proposals will contribute to the development of nursery care places (previous proposals are being fulfilled on schedule):

1. In 2021, the National Family nursery, Workplace nursery and Mini-nursery Development Programme for Non-Municipal Operators called for applications for the development of

family nursery, workplace nursery services and mini nursery facilities. The tender was successful.

2. The tender for the Development of Nursery Education under the Hungarian Recovery and Resilience Plan was launched on 12 November 2021 and was successfully closed.
3. The call for proposals under the Human Infrastructure Development in Support of Childcare (TOP Plus) has been open for applications since December 2021, with different expiry and timing dates for each county (currently in several phases until the end of December 2022).
4. As a continuation of the National Nursery Development Programme announced in 2018, municipalities were again able to submit applications for the development of nursery and mini nursery places from 18 March 2021 to 1 December 2021. A similar proposal opportunity will be closed on December 30th of 2022, which was launched in December of 2021.

In the 2022 central budget, the specific number of estimates and state subsidies/per unit norms for the operation of nursery care settings continued to increase.

The salaries of nursery professionals, who are over-represented by female employees, was further increased by an average of 20% from 1 January 2022 as part of a phased pay rise that has been in place since 2016.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In the prosecutorial training and further training programme adopted by the Prosecutor General every year, we pay special attention to compliance with the various EU directives and planned strategies, thus, to ensure equal access to justice for women, as well as to enforce gender equality.

There is no discrimination of any kind, not even gender-based discrimination in the Prosecution Service of Hungary or in the training courses, as in 2021, for example, we announced two calls for applications for trainee prosecutors, as a result of which the Prosecutor General appointed 52 trainee prosecutors. Out of the 52 persons, the gender ratio is 27 women and 25 men. Both trainees and later on prosecutors are trained in the same way, regardless of sex, and although there is no exact data about the ratio, considering that there are more female employees in the organisation, the proportion of women participating in training is probably higher out of the approx. 2,500 people trained annually.

In our training, we also lay special emphasis on victim protection - which affects women in addition to children the most.

During the 4-day long training of junior prosecutors, we regularly organise lectures with titles "Victims of human trafficking!" and "The classification of human trafficking and the identification of its victims", but victim protection is given high emphasis specifically in the area of human trafficking itself. Just as crimes against sexual freedom and sexual morality are regularly recurring topics in our various training courses.

Ireland

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

In September 2022, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment undertook a public consultation to give stakeholders and interested parties an opportunity to provide their views on the ratification by Ireland of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190). Ireland is committed to proceeding to ratification as quickly as possible, taking into account the need to ensure all necessary legislative and administrative requirements under the Convention are met. Government approval of a decision to ratify the Convention was announced on 1 December, with the instrument of ratification to be submitted in January 2023.¹⁰

The Hate Crime and Hate Speech Bill 2022 was published by Government in October 2022 and is proposed to introduce new, specific aggravated offences with enhanced penalties for crimes motivated by prejudice against certain characteristics, including gender and sex characteristics (meaning all physical and biological features of a person relating to their sex). This will mean that certain types of crimes can be prosecuted as hate crimes where they are motivated by misogyny. The list of identity characteristics protected under the law was developed after extensive consultation and in line with best practice internationally. The Bill is currently before Parliament.¹¹

1.2 Policy changes

An updated statutory code of practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work, developed by the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC), was signed into law by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on 11 March 2022, replacing the previous code of practice issued in 2012.¹²

1.4 Research and awareness raising

In December 2021, the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth published the report, "Statistical Spotlight No. 6 – Gender Norms in Ireland". With the publication of this report, Ireland became the first country to apply the OECD "Man Enough" framework on gender norms to national data to measure norms of masculinities in society. The report provided the basis for a webinar hosted by the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on 2 February 2022 on "Positive Gender Norms in Ireland". The event featured a keynote presentation of the Man Enough report and framework from the OECD Development Centre, along with a presentation of the Spotlight report. Panellists discussed where gender norms fit into the goals of advancing sustainable development and wellbeing in society, and practical measures to encourage gender-equitable gender norms and counter restrictive gender norms. The discussion was captured in a report of the webinar commissioned from Maynooth University. The project was also featured in a side event co-hosted by Ireland with Colombia and the OECD Development Centre at UN CSW66 on 16 March 2022. Ireland will be presenting the Statistical Spotlight as an example of good practice on the role of men and boys in advancing gender equality and breaking stereotypes at a seminar to be co-hosted in Dublin in February 2023 with Austria and the EU Commission under the Mutual Learning Programme on gender mainstreaming.¹³

¹⁰ [https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/news-and-events/department-news/2022/december/20221212.html#:~:text=190\),.gender%2Dbased%20violence%20and%20harassment.](https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/news-and-events/department-news/2022/december/20221212.html#:~:text=190),.gender%2Dbased%20violence%20and%20harassment.)

¹¹ <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/74ed9-new-bill-to-tackle-hate-crime-and-hate-speech-includes-clear-provision-to-protect-freedom-of-expression/>

¹² <https://www.ihrec.ie/documents/code-of-practice-on-sexual-harassment-and-harassment-at-work-2/>

¹³ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/c2a87f-the-statistical-spotlight-series/>

1.5 Other pertinent developments

A special Joint Committee for Gender Equality was formed by Parliament and commenced meeting in December 2021 to consider the recommendations made by the Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality in their final report to the Oireachtas on 2 June 2021. The Committee examined the Assembly's recommendations including for Constitutional reform; Care; Social Protection; Leadership in Politics, Public Life and the Workplace; Norms, Stereotypes & Education; Pay and Workplace Conditions; Domestic, Sexual & Gender-Based Violence; and the Gender Equality Principle in Law and Policy. An interim report on Constitutional change was published in July 2022 followed in December 2022 by a final report on the Joint Committee's work.¹⁴

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Government approved a proposal to provide for a form of domestic violence leave for employees. Amendments to provide for a new right to domestic violence leave were introduced to the Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Bill 2022 at Committee Stage in the Dáil on 8 November 2022. The proposed leave is intended to prevent a victim of domestic violence from losing employment, putting them at risk of falling into poverty, and will allow a victim to find alternative accommodation, seek help from An Garda Síochána or the Courts Service, or to obtain help from support organisations. The leave can be taken immediately and flexibly, with no requirement for proof to be produced by the person availing of the leave. The legislation, if enacted, will include a requirement to review its effectiveness after two years in order to ensure that it is providing the best support possible to anyone experiencing domestic violence. The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth is also commissioning supports for individual employers to develop their own domestic violence workplace policies intended to foster a culture of openness and support for employees who may be experiencing domestic violence.¹⁵

2.2 Policy changes

In June 2022, the Government published the 'Zero Tolerance' Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based violence. The Strategy includes five-year programme of reform to achieve a society which does not accept domestic, sexual and gender-based violence or the attitudes which underpin it. The €363 million strategy is built on four pillars – Protection, Prevention, Prosecution and Policy Co-ordination – and the accompanying implementation plan contains 144 detailed actions and new oversight structures. Its central aim is Zero Tolerance of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence in our society. The actions are drawn from across Government departments and State agencies to reflect the fact that Zero Tolerance can only be achieved through a whole of society effort, and that domestic, sexual and gender-based violence cannot be treated as a criminal justice issue alone. The Strategy also seeks to clearly identify children and young people as both witnesses and victims and survivors.¹⁶

2.3 Institutional changes

Key actions agreed under the 'Zero Tolerance' Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence include the establishment of a statutory agency for domestic, sexual and gender-based violence by January 2024. This new agency will:

- Co-ordinate the implementation of the Strategy, and report to the Minister for Justice. The Cabinet Committee on Social Affairs and Equality will provide political oversight for the implementation of this strategy;

¹⁴ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/committees/33/gender-equality/>

¹⁵ <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/f8cb9-domestic-violence-leave-report/> and <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/bills/bill/2022/92/>

¹⁶ https://merrionstreet.ie/en/news-room/news/government_publishes_zero_tolerance_strategy_to_tackle_domestic_sexual_and_gender-based_violence.174440.shortcut.html

- Deliver services to victims, including the provision of accommodation, helplines and other supports;
- Lead on awareness raising campaigns to reduce incidence of DSGBV and ensure victims can access supports;
- Leading on consistent and ongoing research to inform policy development;
- Report to and follow policy as set down by the Minister for Justice, who has led government responsibility for DSGBV;
- Support the establishment by the Central Statistics Office of a new National Domestic Violence Prevalence Study. The first survey results will be published in 2028, and will be conducted in alternating five-year intervals with the National Sexual Violence Survey, which is due to be published in 2023;
- Provide oversight to be supported by new High-Level Oversight Board to be jointly led by the secretaries general of Department of the Taoiseach and Department of Justice; and
- Work with the Ombudsman for Children to support the strategy, with the Ombudsman providing advice and support to implement actions aimed at children.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Further key actions agreed under the 'Zero Tolerance' Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence include the establishment by the Central Statistics Office of a new National Domestic Violence Prevalence Study. The first survey results will be published in 2028, and will be conducted in alternating five-year intervals with the National Sexual Violence Survey, which is due to be published in 2023.

It is also planned to roll out an online hub on consent and sexual awareness across the third level education sector.

In January 2022, the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science announced the award of Irish Research Council funding for "New Foundations" research projects on societal issues, including projects on gender-based abuse, eating disorders and sexual harassment in school.¹⁷

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

The key actions agreed under the 'Zero Tolerance' Third National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, published in June 2022, include the publication and implementation of the Family Justice Strategy, and enactment of the Family Court Bill to provide for a more user-friendly family court system.

In line with commitments in the "Supporting A Victim's Journey" action plan, in July 2022 the Government approved the General Scheme of a Criminal Justice (Sexual Offences and Human Trafficking) Bill which proposes to put a revised National Referral Mechanism (NRM) on a statutory footing, making it easier for victims of trafficking to come forward, be identified, and access support.¹⁸ The Joint Committee on Justice is currently undertaking pre-legislative scrutiny of the General Scheme.

¹⁷ <https://research.ie/2022/01/17/community-and-voluntary-organisations-to-benefit-from-research-partnerships-funded-by-irish-research-council/>

¹⁸ https://merrionstreet.ie/government_approves_publication_of_general_scheme_of_bill_which_will_strengthen_law_on_consent_in_rape_cases_and_support_victims_in_sexual_violence_and_human_trafficking_cases.html#:~:text=The%20Bill%20will%20also%20provide,in%20all%20sexual%20offences%20trials.

3.2 Policy changes.

Since the launch in 2020 of "Supporting A Victim's Journey: A Plan to Help Victims and Vulnerable Witnesses in Sexual Violence Cases", work has progressed to implement over 50 individual planned reforms aiming to create a victim centred approach to the system of investigating and prosecuting sexual crimes.¹⁹ To date, a number of key actions have been delivered and include the introduction of preliminary trial hearings; the nationwide rollout of Divisional Protective Services Units (DPSUs); the first cohort of staff at a new sexual offences unit in the Director of Public Prosecutions office formally took up their roles in 2021; work to advance the training for all personnel who come into contact with vulnerable victims is under way; and in September 2021 the University of Limerick began training intermediaries.

3.4 Research and awareness-raising

Please see responses to 3.1 & 3.2

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

In July 2022, the Government approved the general scheme of a Bill under which it is proposed to provide for maternity leave for local authority elected members. Following pre-legislative scrutiny, the Local Government (Maternity Protection and Other Measures for Members of Local Authorities) Bill 2022 was published on 25 November 2022 and enacted on 21 December 2022.²⁰

Draft legislative amendments were prepared to provide for the introduction of a scheme of maternity leave for Members of the Oireachtas, following a survey in 2022 by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth of the Members of the Irish Women's Parliamentary Caucus.

4.2 Policy changes

The Forum on a Family Friendly and Inclusive Parliament, convened by the Ceann Comhairle of Dáil Éireann (Speaker of the Lower House) concluded its review and submitted its report in November 2021.²¹ The Houses of the Oireachtas Commission has taken steps towards advancing the Forum's recommendations, and will receive regular progress reports on actions taken to address them. Progress will be reported in its annual reports to the Houses, over the next four years from 2023.

4.3 Institutional changes

On 30 November 2022, the Minister for Planning and Local Government announced the approval of funding of €192,200 to 18 local authorities and one regional women's caucus to support activities to increase the number of female and diverse candidates and councillors running in the Local Elections in 2024. The activities funded include community events, mentoring programmes, workshops for secondary school students, as well as capacity-building training both online and in-person. The funding stream is in its fourth year in 2022, and is part of a broader programme focussing on gender balance and diversity at local government level.²²

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.ie/ga/foilsuichan/bb42e-supporting-a-victims-journey/>

²⁰ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/bills/bill/2022/110/>

²¹ <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/members/office-holders/ceann-comhairle/forum-on-a-family-friendly-and-inclusive-parliament/>

²² <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/9afd9-minister-burke-allocates-192200-to-local-authorities-to-increase-participation-of-women-and-people-of-diversity-in-the-next-local-elections/#:~:text=Minister%20for%20Planning%20and%20Local,the%20Local%20Elections%20in%202024.>

4.4 Research and awareness raising

The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth continue to fund civil society organisations such as the National Women’s Council of Ireland and the not-for-profit organisation Women for Election, for activities including research and analysis of women’s experiences in politics. The most recent reports produced include “Different Paths, Shared Experiences: ethnic minority women and local politics in Ireland” (NTWF, Akidwa, March 2022).²³

In December 2022 the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform published a report: Gender Balance Diversity on State Boards - the next steps, which sets out achievements to date towards meeting the longstanding Government commitment to achieve a 40% representation of women and of men on all State Boards. This report found that females represented 46.1% of the 2,610 members of the State Boards by the end of 2021 and 59% of boards were meeting the 40% target. The report provides for a number of actions to encourage greater female participation on State boards, including measures relating to recruitment campaigns and information awareness raising on the work of a State Board.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

In September 2022, the All-Island Women’s Forum published its first annual report for 2021-2022 of findings and recommendations on key issues affecting women across the island of Ireland. The Forum has made a number of recommendations to both governments, including developing an all-island strategy on gender-based violence, introducing gender quotas for local politics, and a North-South media partnership which would increase women’s voices on all-island issues.

The Forum represents a contribution by the National Women's Council, a civil society body, to the Irish Government’s Shared Island initiative in the Department of an Taoiseach, and aims to enhance civil society links and supporting engagement by women, across communities and traditions on the island, on issues of common concern. The Forum is funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs Reconciliation Fund.²⁴

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

The Government made a commitment in the 2020 Programme for Government to end the current system of accommodation for International Protection applicants and replace it with a new model that is based on a not-for-profit approach. As part of this process, in February 2021 the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth published A White Paper to end Direct Provision and to Establish a new International Protection Support Service that set out a new approach for accommodating applicants that seek International Protection in Ireland and replacing the current system.²⁵ Progress to date includes: the development of the community accommodation model including the acquisition of some properties; the development of an integration programme to support the principle of ‘integration from day one’ as set out in the White Paper; the initiation of a planning process for Phase One Reception and Integration Centres; and the roll out of an integration fund, offering grants to civil society organisations for projects supporting the integration of International Protection Applicants.

The war in Ukraine and a substantial increase in the number of people seeking International Protection in Ireland has had an unavoidable impact on timelines for the implementation of the

²³ <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sociology/events/launch-research-dr-pauline-cullen-shane-gough-different-paths-shared-experiences>

²⁴ https://www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/nwc_all_island_womens_forum_report_2021_22

²⁵ <https://www.gov.ie/en/press-release/af6d6-minister-ogorman-publishes-the-white-paper-on-ending-direct-provision/>

White Paper. In this changed context, an overall review of the projected timelines and deliverables in the White Paper is currently underway.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

In May 2022 Regulations were published under the Gender Pay Gap Information Act 2021 requiring both public and private sector employers with over 250 employees to publish information on the mean and median hourly wage gap in their organisations overall, and for part-time and temporary employees. Employers were also required to publish data on bonus pay, and on the proportions of male and of female employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands showing the extent to which men and women are represented at the various pay levels in the firm. Employers are also obliged to publish a statement setting out, in the employers' opinion, the reasons for any gender pay gaps in their organisation and what measures are being taken or proposed to be taken by the employer to eliminate or reduce that pay gap. The requirement will extend over time to organisations with 50 or more employees. Relevant employers were asked to select a 'snapshot' date in June 2022 in which to base their reporting, and to report within six months of that date. The first reports were published by employers in December 2022.²⁶

6.5 Other pertinent developments,

Over the course of 2022 the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth continued to lead work on the cross-government Equality Budgeting initiative, which has led to work to enhance the visibility and availability of equality data, and to develop organisational capacity for gender and equality proofing to support equality mainstreaming and to implement the statutory Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.²⁷

Following the extension of equality budgeting to all Government Departments in 2021, equality goals and metrics were requested in November 2022 for each individual budgetary programme for each Department under Budget 2023. The national Wellbeing Framework was also further refined in June 2022 along with a pathway for embedding a well-being approach into policy making over time.²⁸

The expansion of equality budgeting and the statutory obligation on public bodies to take account of equality and human rights impacts in the performance of their functions (i.e. the Public Sector Duty) are driving demand for equality data and for increased capacity in gender and equality proofing. Ireland was successful in its application to participate in the EU Commission's flagship project, "Gender Mainstreaming in Public Policy and Budgeting", under its 2022 Technical Support Initiative programme. The project began in mid-2022 and is to run for two years, involving all participant countries in a first umbrella module focused on the concepts involved and exchange of practice, followed by a second module tailored to each country's requirements. The Irish workstream of this project is focused on strengthening gender and equality proofing in Ireland throughout the policy cycle and will run from mid-2022 to 2024. This will include piloting the preparation of gender and equality proofing action plans in 2 to 3 Government Departments and the development of a curriculum for capacity building in regard to gender and equality impact assessment, mainstreaming and budgeting. Ireland's workstream was formally launched in December 2022.

On 21 March 2022, to mark the International Day against Racism, the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth announced the development of a National Equality Data Strategy

²⁶ <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/0cb29-gender-pay-gap-information-act-2021/>

²⁷ <https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/aec432-equality-budgeting/> and <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/e20037-revised-estimates/> and <https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/61d3f-public-service-performance-reports/>

²⁸ <https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/1fb9b-a-well-being-framework-for-ireland-join-the-conversation/>

by the Central Statistics Office and his Department that will put in place a strategic approach to improving the collection, use and dissemination of equality data. A working group led by the Central Statistics Office with policy support from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth has brought together a range of stakeholders from across Government, as well as civil society and research bodies, to develop the Strategy. This builds on the Equality Data Audit published in 2020 by the Central Statistics Office on the initiative of the Equality Budgeting Expert Advisory Group.²⁹ It is intended that the Strategy will be in place from 2023 and that it will provide a general approach for identifying current gaps in Equality data and guidance on how to fill those gaps, as well as develop standard practices in classification.

²⁹ <https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatest/releases/2020/october2020/csopublishesequalitydataaudit/>

Italy

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

Within the framework of Mission 5 of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), investment 1.3 is devoted to the activation of a National Gender Equality Certification System, with the aim of incentivising companies to adopt appropriate policies to reduce the gender gap in all the most critical areas, such as career opportunities, equal pay for equal work, gender equality management policies and maternity protection.

The intervention consists of the following three steps:

- definition of the system for gender equality certification and reward mechanism, starting with the establishment of a Working Group on “Gender Certification of Companies” at the Department for Equal Opportunities;
- creation of an information system for the collection of gender-disaggregated data and information on certification, as well as the register of accredited bodies;
- activation of the gender equality certification system as of the second quarter of 2022.

The certification system will be open to all companies regardless of size requirements. In the pilot phase - which will last until the second quarter of 2026 - certification will be facilitated for medium, small and micro-sized enterprises, and accompanied by complementary assistance services.

1.3 Institutional changes

Through the Budget Law 2022, approved last December 2021, the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026 has been enhanced through an *ad hoc* governance consisting of an interinstitutional Steering Committee and a National Observatory for the integration of gender equality policies.

The Steering Committee was established by Decree of 27 January 2022 and links different administrations involved in order to co-ordinate actions at a central and territorial level. Among its tasks, the Steering Committee carries out periodic assessment over the implementation of measures and interventions provided for in the National Strategic Plan for Gender Equality, as well as ensures the planning of resources allocated to financing the Plan. The Steering Committee is chaired by the Prime Minister or by the political authority in charge for equal opportunities and is composed of 20 Ministers and 3 designated by the Unified Conference.

The National Observatory for the Integration of Gender Policies, established by the Decree of 22 February 2022, is a technical body supporting the Steering Committee, in order to monitoring, analysing, studying and proposing possible tools for the definition and implementation of the Strategy, evaluating its impact in order to improve its effectiveness and integrate its provisions and actions.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

By Decree of 22 April 2021 the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family set up a Working Group at the Department for Equal Opportunities on issues relating to the rebalancing of gender representation in institutions and the revision of appointment and election procedures, as well as to support the evaluation of measures introduced to protect equal opportunities.

The WG, composed of nine university professors in the fields of constitutional law, public law and comparative public law, was assigned the task of carrying out in-depth studies and drafting proposals, including legislative ones, aimed at rebalancing gender representation in institutions and revising appointment and election procedures.

The outcomes of the WG are provided in a Working Paper published on 1 December 2021.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The female presence in Public Service Broadcasting (RAI) programming is at 37%, at the bottom of the European public service media rankings. Women are mainly called upon to represent and recount their personal experiences; much more rarely to show their expertise. Only 22.3% of the experts in Public Service programmes are female. The 'No Women No Panel' initiative, initiated by the European Commission, was taken up in 2020 by Radio Rai Uno. Gradually, institutions and organisations from all over Italy joined in, also receiving the endorsement of the Head of State. In recent months, a Memorandum of Understanding has been drawn up committing the Public Service to include female and male speakers as equally as possible in the debates.

Making the best skills and experience gained in public administration available to primary and secondary schools to train students about respect for others and equal opportunities: this is the goal of the 'Pari si cresce, 8 marzo in rete' project, which is based upon a MoU signed on 8 March 2021 between the Minister for Public Administration, the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family, the Minister for Education, and the National Network of Guarantee Committees. It envisages that approximately 200 Guarantee Committees for equal opportunities set up in public administrations (Ministries, Regions, local authorities, Local Health Units, Universities, National Agencies) by Legislative Decree No. 165/2001, strengthened by Directives 4 March 2011 and 2/2019 and now brought together in the National Network - provide support, information and training to develop cultural interventions in schools, in collaboration with school staff, aimed at fostering educational growth and respect education against all forms of discrimination.

As for the above mentioned gender certification system, the Decree of 29 April 2022 of the Minister for Equal Opportunities - issued pursuant to Article 1, paragraph 147 of Law No. 234 of 30 November 2021 (Budget Law 2022) - has implemented since 1 July 2022 the Guidelines on the Management System for Gender Equality that envisages the adoption of specific KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) inherent to UNI/PdR 125:2022 Reference Practice, as minimum parameters for the achievement of gender equality certification for companies. This is an important step in the establishment of the National System for the certification of gender equality in companies, as key action of the NRRP under the Department for Equal Opportunities, which aims to accompany and incentivise companies to adopt appropriate policies to reduce the gender gap.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Following the approval of Act No. 53 of 2022, the Italian Parliament has ruled the collection of data and information on gender-based violence against women in order to monitor the phenomenon and develop policies to prevent and combat it. To this end, the law:

- introduces the obligation for offices, bodies, organisations and public and private entities involved in official statistical information to provide data and information for compiling all kind of surveys of the national statistical programme, as well as to collect, process and disseminate gender-disaggregated data;
- introduces an obligation for all public health facilities, and in particular first aid units, to provide data and news on violence against women;
- establishes an integrated system between the Ministries of the Interior and of Justice for the collection of data concerning offences under the umbrella definition of violence against women, with particular regard to those data that facilitate the conceptual relationship between the perpetrator and the victim of the offence;

- provides that data concerning specific offences could be amended so that data concerning the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim of the offence, their age and gender, and the circumstances of the offence are recorded;
- refines, by enriching them with additional information data, the annual surveys of ISTAT on the performance and services offered by anti-violence centres and shelters respectively.

Furthermore, on 16 February 2022 a government bill (S. 2530) on 'provisions for preventing and combating the phenomenon of violence against women and domestic violence' was submitted in the Italian Senate for debate. It provides for amendments to the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Anti-Mafia Code (Legislative Decree No. 159/2011) and some special laws in order to make the system of measures to prevent and combat violence against women more effective. In particular it:

- extends the applicability of the Questore's warning for domestic violence to every conduct which puts at risk the psycho-physical integrity of persons in the context of family and emotional relationships. The penalties are also increased when the offence is committed by a person who has already been cautioned, and proceedings are taken *ex officio* for certain offences when committed by a person who has already been cautioned;
- provides for the revocation of the precautionary measure and its replacement by custody in prison in the event of tampering with the electronic bracelet. In ordering the coercive measure of removal from the family home using electronic means of control, the judge must provide for the application, even jointly, of a more serious measure if the defendant refuses to consent to the adoption of the electronic means of control. The same measure is provided for in the case of a prohibition to approach places frequented by the offended person;
- it intervenes on the Anti-Mafia Code by extending the applicability of personal prevention measures to persons suspected of certain serious offences committed in the context of gender-based violence and domestic violence and to persons who, having already been warned by the Questore, are suspected of the crimes of assault, injury, private violence, aggravated threats, trespassing and damage, committed in the context of domestic violence;
- expands the catalogue of offences for which there is an obligation - on the part of the police, health authorities and public institutions that receive information from the victim - to inform the victim about the anti-violence centres in the area and to put her or him in contact with these centres if she or he requests them;
- introduces an additional hypothesis of detention ordered by the Public Prosecutor, by reasoned decree, against the person seriously suspected of mistreatment against family members, personal injuries and stalking;
- intervenes on the benefit of a suspended sentence for crimes of gender and domestic violence, allowing the judge to make use of external criminal enforcement offices to identify the bodies or associations dealing with prevention, psychological assistance and recovery of persons convicted of crimes of domestic violence and gender violence and the specific recovery paths provided for them;
- introduces the obligation to arrest the suspect in *flagrante delicto* in the event of violation of protection orders adopted in civil law;
- provides that in proceedings for gender and domestic violence offences, the termination or revocation of coercive precautionary measures, as well as their replacement with less serious measures, are to be communicated to the Questore, for the purposes of assessing its competence in the field of prevention measures, and to the Prefect for the purposes of an eventual adoption of dynamic supervision measures to protect the offended person;
- introduces a provisional provision for an advanced compensation in favour of the victim or, in the event of death, of the beneficiaries who, as a consequence of the offences of homicide, sexual assault or grievous bodily harm, and deformation of appearance by means of permanent facial injuries, committed by a spouse, including a separated or divorced

spouse, or by a person who is or has been bound by a relationship of affection to the offended person, find themselves in a state of need;

- establishes that, for offences of attempted murder or, in the forms committed or attempted, ill-treatment against family members and cohabitants, sexual violence, sexual acts with a minor, corruption of a minor, group sexual violence, persecutory acts, as well as certain aggravated cases of personal injury and deformation of the appearance of the person by means of permanent facial injuries committed in the context of domestic violence, the police body prosecuting the complaint or lawsuit - if the initial investigations reveal concrete and relevant elements of danger of a repetition of the conduct - notifies the Prefect who may adopt dynamic surveillance measures to protect the offended person;
- provides for the possibility of arrest, even outside cases of *flagrante delicto* (in which arrest is mandatory), no later than forty-eight hours after the offence has been committed, and serves to allow arrest even if the person, at the time of arrival of the police, has moved away.

2.2 Policy changes

Following the issuance in 2015 of the first Extraordinary Action Plan against Sexual and Gender-based Violence and the National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women 2017-2020, the third National Strategic Plan on Male Violence against Women for the two-year period 2021-2023 was recently adopted.

The Plan has provided a set of measures to create a society free from violence. The focus is on strengthening the enjoyment of fundamental rights, preventing, and contrasting this phenomenon and addressing those conditions that cause social and economic exclusion of women and girls putting them at highest risk to be victims of violence.

In continuity with the previous Strategic Plan 2017-2020, the Plan is articulated along key Axes in accordance with core-lines of action of the Istanbul Convention: Prevention, Protection, and Support, Prosecution and Punishment, Assistance and Promotion. In addition, each Axis is associated with specific Priorities, which address the most significant dimensions of male violence against women.

With regard to prevention, the priorities are: increase of awareness in public opinion and in the educational and training system on causes and consequences of male violence against women; the involvement of the private sector (social, platforms, mass media) on stereotypes and sexism, also in relation to cyber-violence and illegal dissemination of sexually explicit images or videos; the promotion of female empowerment through actions to emerge and combat violence against women victims of multiple discrimination; reinforced prevention of recidivism for men perpetrators of violence; the training of professional figures who, in various capacities, interact with women victims and minors in the path of prevention, support and reintegration; regulatory measures also to prevent secondary victimisation.

On victims' protection and support, the priorities are: taking in charge women victims of violence and minors who witness violence; the activation of paths of economic-financial empowerment, employment and housing autonomy; the monitoring and improvement of the effectiveness of the 'Pathways for women who suffer violence' provided by health authorities and hospitals; the strengthening of the national free anti-violence hotline 1522; the protection and psycho-social support of minors who witness violence; the implementation of operational solutions to guarantee access to prevention, support and reintegration services, in particular for women victims of multiple discrimination (migrants, asylum seekers and refugees).

With regard to the axis of prosecute and punish, the priorities are: guarantee procedures and tools for the protection of women victims of violence that allow an effective and rapid assessment and management of the risk of lethality, reiteration and recidivism; to define a shared model of

approach, management and risk assessment; to improve the effectiveness of judicial proceedings when applying precautionary measures and sentences; to define guidelines for the analysis and qualitative and quantitative monitoring of interventions carried out within the programmes for abused men.

Finally, in the field of assistance and promotion, the priorities are: the implementation of an integrated information system for data collection and analysis; the implementation of a national monitoring and evaluation system of interventions, policies, activities and resources; the preparation of guidelines, in agreement with Regions, to harmonise qualitative and quantitative standards of services provided by the anti-violence centres, territorial networks and the socio-health system on a national level; information and awareness about regulatory tools and operational interventions in support of women victims of male violence.

With regard to available financial resources to support the actions envisaged by the Plan, reference should be made to the Fund for Equal Opportunities whose allocation is established by Ministry of the Economy and Finance and then managed within the budget of the Presidency of the Council: for 2022 it amounts to EUR 39.1 million.

2.3 Institutional changes

On 13 May 2022, the Decrees of 29 March and 12 April 2022, signed by Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family, were published in the Official Bulletin, establishing the inter-institutional Steering Committee and the Observatory on the phenomenon of violence against women and domestic violence.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

The lack of data on the incidence of crimes involving women as victims has been tackled by the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT) and the Department for Equal Opportunities through the creation of a dedicated webpage on the ISTAT website, providing an integrated information framework on violence against women in Italy.

An accurate analysis of crimes concerning the phenomenon of male violence against women is carried out periodically by the Department of Public Security of the Ministry of the Interior, which publishes on its website weekly and half-yearly monitoring reports on the most widespread crimes against women.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

- the accessibility, responsiveness, competence and gender-sensitivity of legal aid and public defence to the needs of women.

In case of **destitute subjects**, irrespective of their gender, the State shall provide for the so-called **legal aid** in both civil and criminal cases. It can be granted upon request of a party by the Bar Association (COA) of the forum of the litigation based on objective criteria such as lack of income and no manifestly ill-founded claim. According to recent case-law, in the matter of legal aid, lawyers of the party qualified for legal aid cannot claim their fees from their clients, in the absence of an order revoking the benefit issued by the judge of the main proceeding. Therefore, only after the issuance of the revocation order can lawyers claim their fees, in full or, in case of changes in the financial conditions of their client, at the time the said change occurs (see Cass. 10669/ 2020). Under Articles 112 and 136, second paragraph, of Presidential Decree No. 115/2002 “the judge, by means of decree revokes the qualification for legal aid provisionally ordered by the Bar Association, where the relevant requirements are not satisfied...”. Revocation shall be ordered only in the interest of

the State and not of the lawyer, and it is not admissible after the case is settled, on grounds that the party acted or resisted in court **in bad faith or gross negligence** (see Cass viv. N. 10669/2020).

Under Article 76 (4) of Presidential Decree No. 115/2002, as reformulated in 2009, victims of offences covered by Articles 572, 583-bis, 609-bis, 609-quater, 609-octies and 612-bis, as well as, underage victims of offences covered by Articles 600, 600-bis, 600-ter, 600-quinquies, 601, 602, 609-quinquies and 609-undecies of the criminal Code, may also be admitted to legal aid in derogation of the income limits laid down in the law provisions on legal aid.

Therefore, in principle, the procedural rules on legal aid do not differ from those laid down in respect of every destitute person. By contrast, technical trial defence is supported by the State for certain types of offences exempted from income limits, as is the case for family abuse, female genital mutilation acts and sexual abuse, mostly affecting the female gender.

- the rules on the burden of proof in order to ensure a fair treatment of women's cases:

It is worth noting that the Italian legal system, both from the criminal and civil viewpoint, does not allow for a particular regime of the burden of proof and relevant gender related evaluation. Nonetheless, selected categories of subjects are entitled to some evidentiary facilities, irrespective of gender.

Evidence of workplace **bullying** and the court's unofficial powers were the focus of many lower court judgments in the framework of labour litigation. Under the Italian legal system, when the civil dispute affects workers, female or male, the labour procedural rules laid down in Title IV of the Code of Civil procedure shall apply which are special in nature and afford sufficient safeguards in favour of workers, regardless of their gender. *The balance between the principle of the adversarial system and the requirement of the **search for material truth** is at the heart of **labour litigation**.* Therefore, whenever the findings of a case yield substantial evidentiary data, the judge who deems the evidence already acquired insufficient, should not merely apply the conventional trial rule based on the burden of proof, but is compelled and empowered to trigger ex officio the investigative acts urged by such evidence and suitable for overcoming the uncertainty of the facts underlying the disputed rights, regardless of any bar or limitation to the detriment of the parties. What's more, while the use of ex officio powers under Article 421 of the Code of Civil Procedure shall always be justified, failure to exercise them, should only be substantiated in connection with specific circumstances requiring further evidence. (Cass. 24 October 2007 No. 22305; Cass. Sez. L - , Order No. 24024 of 6 September 2021 on the unofficial authority to order an expert opinion).

As to the **relaxation of the burden of proof in favour of persons complaining of discrimination**, it was highlighted (see Cass. 27 September 2018 No. 23338, Cass. 12 October 2018 No. 25543) under the directives on the matter at issue, No. 2000/78, as well as No. 2006/54 and 2000/43, as interpreted by the Court of Justice, and transposing legislative decrees which require the introduction of a mechanism of evidentiary facilitation or the mitigation of the burden of proof on the claimant, that claimants are required to submit allegations and prove factual circumstances from which it can be inferred that discrimination has indeed taken place, whereas it on the employer to prove the absence of discrimination. (see. Cass. No. 14206 of 2013, on gender discrimination). The mere application of the burden of proof in terms of Article 2729 of the Civil Code, whereby each party is required to comply with the burden of proof principle, is not in line with the European law and the reading of the provision in Article 4 of Legislative Decree 216/2003 (which was followed by the introduction of Article 28 of Legislative Decree No. 150/2011, preceded by the opening of an infringement procedure against Italy for failing to comply with the criteria set out by the directive at issue), is now interpreted not as a real and actual reversal of the burden of proof, but rather a **facilitation in favour of persons complaining of discrimination** and may find it difficult to demonstrate discriminatory acts against them, notably in cases involving a plurality of workers (Cass. civ. n.1/2020).

It follows that it is on persons claiming discrimination to demonstrate the risk factor, the treatment they assume as less favourable than that provided to persons in similar conditions and not carrying the risk factor, deriving a significant correlation between these elements which make discrimination plausible. By contrast, the person held accountable shall infer and demonstrate unmistakable circumstances, apt to exclude, by accuracy, seriousness and consistency of interpretation, the discriminatory nature of the act (i.e., termination), insofar as it demonstrates a choice that would have been made with the same parameters with respect to any worker lacking the risk factor, placed in the same position (see Cass. No. 14206/13 in line with the indications by the Court of Justice 17 July 2008, C-303/06 Colemann, ; C-54/07 Feryn, 16.7.15 ; C- 83/14 Chez).

Wide criminal protection is embedded in the Italian legal system depending on the background, frequency and intensity of the discriminatory activity, as this conduct may amount to different indictable offences. Prosecution shall establish the type of alleged offence which may be otherwise typified by the court within a different legal framework, without prejudice to the offended party or the defence rights (see point 3.4 which follows).

When the discriminatory conduct is liable to prosecution, proof of the relevant liability is subject to a stringent burden of proof (beyond any reasonable doubt) on behalf of the prosecutor in charge of the case, arising from the **statute of guarantees afforded to the defendant under Article 27 of the Constitution**, in that *“it must be ascertained, evaluating the events brought before the court and claimed as damaging ... which may be demonstrated because of their continuation and duration over time, by the objective persecution and discriminatory nature, arising from emulative and prejudicial features”* (Cass. Crim. div. 5, judgment No. 33624 of 9 July 2007)

- rules to allow groups and civil society organisations with an interest in a given case to lodge petitions and participate in the proceedings;

The Italian legal system envisages several forms of protection of collective interests.

In the first place, the Statute of Labourers, a law dating back to the seventies and still in force, stipulates that the proceeding under **Article 28** aimed at suppressing anti-union conducts, is restricted to cases in which the protection of the **union’s collective interest in the free exercise of its prerogatives** is at stake, an interest that is **distinct and autonomous vis-à-vis that of individual workers**. For example, in terms of redundancy funds, the assistance of the union or union representatives in the factory, or in case of absence of the leading representative confederation is laid down in Article 5 of Law 20 May 1975, No. 164 (on “Measures to secure wages”) for the purposes of examining the overall business situation, reviewing the crisis, if any, as well as assessing the interests of workers in a global dimension, so as to protect the collective interests of workers and safeguarding employment levels. There is no question that, in respect of the specific positions of individual workers, such a measure is in itself suitable for guaranteeing that the choice of employees to be placed on lay-off, including when timing and stages have been agreed upon in the union, is not the result of discrimination to the detriment of some and in favour of other employees (Cass. Sez. L, judgment No. 6338 of 6 June 1995).

Article 5, paragraph 2, of Legislative Decree No. 216/2003 stipulates that action be undertaken by trade unions, associations and organisations representing the right or the interest affected where **collective discrimination is claimed against a group of workers identifiable by union membership**, and hence not directly or immediately identified as persons harmed by discrimination (see Cass. 20 July 2018-19443). Despite the points of contact, the two procedural actions reserved for the union are different and the choice to make the union membership part of the personal conviction grounds may result in making the two actions partly fungible (Cass. Sez.I. n. 1/2020).

In criminal cases, trade unions are entitled to join as civil parties in the criminal proceeding to protect the same collective interests, even if the offence involves an individual worker, when a discrimination issue arises. According to case-law the type of offence encompassing the elements typical of the so-called **bullying** is the one described in Article 572 of the Criminal Code (abuse) committed by a person vested with authority to practice a profession. In this respect, a case (which has turned out to be notorious) involving a mass bullying of the LAF building in Taranto, Italy, was ruled by the Court of Cassation, VI criminal division, 21 September 2006, No. 31413 that established that the offences of attempted private violence and fraud in obtaining a judgment had been committed. In these circumstances, employers who forced or tried to force some employees into accepting a renegotiation of the employment relationship involving their “demotion” (in the case at issue being a downgrading from the position of clerk to that of worker) by threatening to otherwise assign them to forced and humiliating inertia in a crumbling environment marginalised from the rest of the corporate context, with a view to their future dismissal, were liable of private violence, attempted or committed. Cassazione, VI sez. pen, 11 June 2007, No. 22702 and Cassazione, VI sez. pen., 7 November 2007, No. 40891 have applied, for other types of offences, the provision on abuses in official acts: the first judgment in a case of demotion and defamation committed by a person in a higher position (who had failed to formally complain to their subordinates about their shortcomings, but had instead written them down in letters addressed to superiors), whereas in the second judgment the provision was applied affirming that the change of duties of a municipal employee from performing the role of bursar co-ordinator to preventing and detecting parking infringements amounts to an offence. In its reasoning, the Court highlighted that said provisions, though allowing the assignment of an employee to lower-level duties, nevertheless require the occasional nature of the assignment and the possibility that this takes place on a rotational basis.

Likewise, women’s rights associations enjoy, by well-established principle, active and passive legitimacy, to assert the collective interest in protecting women’s rights. For instance, in the matter of **sexual offences**, the municipality where the offence was committed is entitled to intervene as a civil party in order to obtain compensation for moral and material damages deriving from the direct and immediate violation of the statutory purpose. In this respect, see Cass. Criminal division 3, judgment no. 45963 of 27 June 2017: the municipality of Turin was indeed entitled to intervene as a civil party in the proceeding, being the funder and direct provider of services specifically aimed at victims of sexual violence, and by statute and in a tangible way committed to combating violence against women. Also, Cass. Criminal Division VI, 16 April 2009, No. 16031 held that was admissible for the regional councilwomen of equality to join the civil action, *jure proprio*, as party harmed by the crime, in relation to a case of abuse to the detriment of a group of female workers committed by a supervisor of the employer (see comment in Notiz. Giurisprud. Lav., 2009, 305).

However, where no union right is involved, judicial protection aimed at eradicating discriminatory conducts, in terms of Articles 4 of Legislative Decree No. 215 of 2003 and 28 of Legislative Decree No. 150 of 2011 falls within the general rule of Article 100 of the Code of Civil Procedure (Interest in action) Hence, in the event of early settlement of the case, the persistence of the need for the entity bearer of the collective interest to take action should be excluded, as the link with the factual matter in relation to which the need for protection had arisen has ceased. Division L - , judgment No. 32388 of 8 November 2021; Cass. Division 2 - , judgment No. 2057 of 24 January 2019; Cass. Division L - , judgment no. 11165 of 8 May 2017).

The assessment of the damage suffered by the victim of the discriminatory act and by bodies tasked with the protection of collective interests can only be fair and both academia and case-law hold that account should be taken not only of the consequences produced in the legal sphere of the victim, but also aspects pertaining to the agent, such as the criminal relevance, if any, the degree of unlawfulness, as well as the possible enrichment in terms of costs restrictions.

- the removal from existing laws, procedures, regulations, jurisprudence, customs, of direct or indirect discrimination against women.

As highlighted by the European Commission in its Communications on the Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025, no member State has achieved gender equality so far: progress is slow and gender gaps persist in the labour market at the level of wages, welfare and pensions, in leadership positions, and in participation in political and institutional life. In view of the new Horizon Europe funding programme for research and innovation (2021-2027), by the end of February 2021, the European Union published (ECR) European Research Council Work Programme, covering technical information for prospective applicants and funding requests. An important new innovation stands out in the new Horizon Europe calls for proposals: the entity that would host the research in case of successful application, is required to declare that a Plan for Gender Equality is in place, better known as Gender Equality Plan (GEP).

In the 2020 Gender Equality Index published by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) Italy scored 63.50 out of 100. However, this score is lower in the areas of **power, leisure and knowledge**.

The gender equality issue has become even more pressing during pandemic emergency, whose impact affected the female gender both in the labour field (out of the 444,000 fewer people employed in Italy in all 2020, 70% are women) and in the social sphere, with an increase in domestic violence. This is why emergency laws passed in the age of pandemic prioritised all issues related to women's protection, vulnerable people and minors which were in fact not subject to suspensions or deferral in courts.

Overcoming gender disparities is the focus of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) to kick-start the national development in the aftermath of the pandemic. Gender equality is one of the three cross-cutting priorities pursued in all its six missions. Basically, the measures envisaged by the NRRP in favour of gender equality are mainly addressed to promoting greater female participation rate in the labour market, by means of: **Direct initiatives to support women's employment and entrepreneurship, indirect or enabling initiatives targeted at boosting educational services for children and given social services** listed in the NRRP that are likely to encourage increased female employment.

It is worth highlighting that both direct and indirect discrimination are typified in Article 2 of Legislative Decree **216/2003**, whereby direct discrimination refers to cases where *"because of religion, personal beliefs, handicap, age or sexual orientation persons are treated less favourably if they were in a similar situation"* whereas indirect discrimination refers to cases where *"an ostensibly impartial provision, standard, practice, act, covenant or conduct may place persons practising a religion or ideology of another nature, persons with disabilities, persons of a particular age or sexual orientation at a particular disadvantage compared to other persons"*.

What's more, Italy is actively involved in the European Union negotiation on the **proposal for directive on equal pay** through wage transparency, where the key points are to recognise the **effectiveness of workers' rights, even if not formally on employment contract, by setting reduced litigation costs and limitation periods**, starting from when the claimant is aware of or should reasonably be aware of the violation.

These principles are embedded in the Italian legal system, which can be retrieved in Article 92 (2) of the code of civil procedure stipulating a mitigation of the principle of the acquiescence in lawsuit with respect to litigation costs in the event of novelties arising, changes in case-law or "serious or exceptional reasons" (see Constitutional court, judgment 19 April 2018 No. 77). The last passage covers a general clause suitable for a given socio-historical context or special situations, not exactly and effectively definable in advance, but to be clarified in the interpretation by the judge on the merits of the case (see Cass. Division 6 - 2, Order No. 7992 of 11 March 2022). In addition, Article 2935 of the Civil Code stipulates that the limitation period shall start running from the day on which

the right can be claimed. In the legislation on labour relations or in cases of alleged discrimination, the said principles have always been highly valued in court proceedings.

In this respect, it is worth recalling, as a cornerstone, the European Court of Justice judgment handed down on 3 June 2021 in the matter of K and others vs Tesco Stores Ltd, C-624/19, establishing the **principle of equal pay for “work of equal value”** for men and women alike, no longer related to the notion of “same work” or “equal work”, which has shown all its limitations, but instead work originating from a single source: the same employer. It was through this principle, enshrined in Article 157 TFEU and always regarded as having direct effect on ordinary courts, that wage transparency was established at European level to counter to discriminatory gender difference (gender pay gap).

However, the said principle can only be applied in respect of subordinate work.

There is a consensus among scholars that the pay gap between the two distinct genders (male and female) holds today a notoriously greater weight in self-employment, where the female sex suffers from a certain type of customers, sectors of operation and the inability to achieve a total number of hours worked at the same level as that offered by the male sex, receiving 60% of the pay of a man of the same level

(see. Anna Zilli, *nota a Corte di giustizia UE, 3 giugno 2021, C- 624/19*, in law on industrial relations, fasc. 3 , 2021 , 956).

In addition, it should be highlighted that at domestic level, currently no provisions covering **workplace bullying** are in place. It is likewise significant that the majority of cases on record in case-law, where this form of discrimination, both vertical and horizontal, has been transposed and examined, involve women workers. It worth noting that **workplace bullying** is covered in the **anti-discriminatory** sets of law passed by the parliament or transposing EU regulations.

The EU notion of discrimination, transposed in domestic law by Legislative Decrees No. 215 and 216 of 2003, includes harassment and order of discrimination (regardless of its execution) on account of typified grounds: “*Harassment is to be considered a form of discrimination in case of any unwanted conduct adopted with the aim or effect of violating the dignity of a person and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating and abusive environment*”. From a practical viewpoint, equating harassment with discrimination makes it possible to apply the **facilitating evidentiary regime** and the **highly stringent sanction regime laid down in the anti-discriminatory regulations**.

What is more, it should be recalled that sources of law include “relevant grounds” for a conduct to amount to discrimination. In EU regulations, and hence in transposing decrees, reference is made to **race, ethnic origin, religion, beliefs, disabilities, age, sex, sexual orientation**, whereas in domestic regulations in addition to the referred grounds also **language, political belief, religious belief, trade union membership, participation in trade union activities and HIV status** are taken into account. These are the typical grounds for discrimination, that is the grounds underlying acts or conducts that the legal system qualifies as discriminatory from a technical viewpoint and accordingly provides for a specific protection. In this respect, the Supreme Court, by ruling No. 10037/2015 dealing with a case of a city employee found to have been “*deprived of her duties and consequently marginalised, being moved with no valid reasons from one office to another, humiliated for being placed under the direction of her former subordinate, being assigned to an office open to the public without having the possibility of being able to work which made her humiliation even more bitter*” indicated the specific criteria (7) for holding this conduct as discrimination typifying the relevant features in the case-law. Hence, the referred conduct is typified by: (1) conflicts, mortifications or whatever must last for a reasonable period of time (2) be not episodic, but reiterated and multiple. (3) multiple hostile actions must occur, including at least: (4) attacks on the ability to communicate, marginalisation on a regular basis, changes in work duties, attacks on reputation, violence or threats,

a disparity between the opposing parties, with the claimant self-evident inferiority. (5) The case shall unfold according to the subsequent steps: targeted conflict, initiation of *bullying*, psychosomatic symptoms, mistakes and abuse, aggravation of health conditions, exclusion from work. (6) In addition to all listed above, there must be persecutory intent, (7) that is, a premeditated intent to harass the employee (criteria also confirmed in Cass. Division L - , judgment No. 7097 of 22 March 2018).

Another aspect regulated by our national law makers that may indirectly affect every kind of discrimination is **legislation on safety in the workplace**, more recently set out by Legislative Decree No. 81 of 9 April 2008. The above legislation does not address bullying directly, but sets forth different useful rules: for instance the definition of **workers' health** itself (as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, and not only the absence of disease or infirmity) or a wide-ranging and general rule on "**risk assessment**" falling under the obligatory and non-delegable responsibility (Article 16) of employers (called on to make a global and informed assessment of all the risks for the health and safety of workers employed in their organisation, to identify **adequate prevention and protection measures** and put in place a **programme of measures capable of ensuring the improvement over time of the levels of security and health**), or lastly the scope of the rules on safety (which concern all types of risks, in every activity).

Apart from the above rules, we have the **general principle provided for in Article 2087 of the civil code** entitled "**protection of working conditions**", which provides for - as legal effect of the contract, and not as a natural consequence thereof, since it is not an obligation that may be departed from - **the obligation on employers to protect the physical integrity and moral personality of workers**. The said obligation goes in conjunction with Articles 2049 and 2059 of the civil code, and the regime of co-responsibility of employers for acts put in place by their employees that cause non-pecuniary damages to other employees. The said discipline, in its capacity as "gap-filling rule" of "the system, puts on employers a special and autonomous obligation to protect workers in as much as persons and sets forth a particularly wide-ranging and flexible rule, comprehensive not only of the obligation to comply with the conditions and restraints set forth by the laws and regulations on accident prevention in the workplace and occupational hygiene, but also to introduce and maintain measures capable of concretely preventing accidents and any harm to workers, as a result of natural or artificial hazardous factors in the work environment that may affect not only the psycho-physical integrity of workers but also their *moral personality*. Under **Article 2087 of the Civil Code**, employers are also obliged to refrain from introducing "**straining**" working conditions that may harm the fundamental rights of employees. In fact, on this point, trial judges, even when they find that there is no persecutory intent capable of unifying the incidents in such a way as to amount to "bullying", are under the obligation to assess whether pursuant to the elements of the case- its characteristics, seriousness, personal or professional frustration or other circumstances - it is possible to assume the existence of this less severe damage (Cass. Division L, Judgment n. 3291 of 19 February 2016 Cc. Division L-, ORDER n. 2676 of 4 February 2021 Cc.

Our national law maker has been showing interest in bullying for some time and in the course of recent legislatures different bills have been submitted.

The above unlawful acts may amount to different forms of disciplinary wrongdoings also for the people assigned to a specific unit, and not only for employers.

Acts of bullying may amount to criminal offences (leading to compensation for the so-called moral or immaterial damage caused to a person), when they amounts to: violence against a person (Article 610 of the Criminal Code), bodily injuries (Article 582 of the Criminal Code), death or bodily injuries as a consequence of another offence (Article 586 of the Criminal Code), incitement to commit suicide (Article 580 of the Criminal Code), harassment (Article 660 of the Criminal Code), sexual harassment or sexual violence (Article 609 bis of the Criminal Code) abuses (Article 572 of the Criminal Code) slander or libel (Articles 594 and 595 of the Criminal Code), abuse of Office (Article 323 of the

Criminal Code), discriminatory conduct (Articles 15 and 38 st.lab, and 4 of Legislative Decree 216 of 2003). It is possible to apply the aggravating circumstances as per Articles 61 n. 11 of the Criminal Code (when the act is committed by abuse of authority or abuse of family relations, or by abuse of office relations, abuse of performance of service or of hospitality).

In terms of compensation due for harassment or abuses suffered in the workplace by a public servant, the Civil Joint Divisions of the Supreme Court of cassation, by judgment No. 13246 of 16 May 2019, Rv. 654026-01, rendered at the hearing of 09 April 2019, enunciated that: *“The State or public entity shall answer in a civil lawsuit for the damage caused to third parties by the criminal wrongdoing put in place by an employee even when the latter has taken advantage of his office and acted for exclusively personal and selfish ends that are estranged from those of his administration, as long as his conduct is linked to his functions and would not have otherwise been put in place if he had not covered such functions or had had such powers. (“nesso di occasionalità necessaria”).* An unlawful conduct that is a source of a claimable damage - resulting from an unlawful damage to third parties - consequently has to be connected to the exercise of the function or powers in question, which although deviated or abusive or unlawful, do not amount to an objectively anomalous behaviour.

In terms of **an employer’s criminal liability for acts that amount to bullying**, the Supreme Court of cassation has ruled on the matter on different occasions, setting forth the elements of the relevant criminal offences. By judgment cass, VI criminal division, 22 January 2001, No. 10090, the Supreme Court handed down some elements that abstractly constitute the offence of abuses against subordinates in workplace relations, pointing out that “these acts constitute the offence of abuses envisaged by Article 572 of the Criminal code, and not the offence of “abuse of means of correction or discipline” (Article 571 of the Criminal code). In another case, the Supreme Court (Cass. 29 August 2007, n. 33624, (att.17) cleared that a court has to exclude the offence of **voluntary aggravated bodily harm** caused by an alteration of the tone and mood of a teacher when the individual harmful acts allegedly causing the said harm are not specified, considering that the claimed phenomenon requires a targeted reiteration of multiple converging attitudes expressing hostility against the victim and preordained at humiliating and isolating an employee in the work environment. On the other hand, the said phenomenon, as it is described, appears to be closer to the offence as per Article 572 of the Criminal Code (**abuses committed by an individual invested with authority**), which applies when the hostile actions in any case meet the parameters of frequency and duration in time with a view to assessing their overall persecutory and discriminatory character (in the case at issue not fully charged)>>. The judgment, although excluding the appropriateness of the indictment in relation to the charged offence, explains that “bullying presumes not so much an individual harmful act but a targeted reiteration of a multitude of attitudes, even if not individually constituting a criminal offence, convergent both in expressing the hostility of the perpetrator against the victim and in having an effective capacity of humiliating and isolating the employee in the work environment”.

Lastly, in terms of the criminal case law, the Court of Turin of First Instance on 3 May 2005 handed down the first court ruling on the merit to consider the issue of the importance, or not, in an indictment for abuses, of **an employer’s jus corrigendi** in relation to the unlawful conduct of a worker, excluding its justification also in view of the specificity of the disciplinary sanctions an employer may resort to when his employees violate the rules on the proper performance of their work.

We need to stress that in criminal proceedings instituted to ascertain the commission of offences against women, the decision of the Strasbourg Court, in judgment M.C. vs Italy of 7 July 2022 (No. 32715/19), and again in judgment De Gregori vs Italy of 16 June 2022 (n. 23735/19), covers the question of **domestic violence**.

Italy has been convicted, in the case at issue, in relation to a part of the time taken into consideration, for a “substantive law” violation of Article 3 of the Convention on Human Right and Fundamental

Freedoms (in respect of a given period considered by the application) and “procedural law” violation (always in relation to the failed promptness and diligence to respond of the judicial authorities, aggravated by the running out of the time limitation). Nearly all the criminal proceedings instituted against the husband ended with the acquittal of the defendant because the time limitation of the offences charged had run out. Only in 2020, thus sixteen years after the applicant first reported the wrongdoings, did the Court of First Instance hold her husband guilty, sentencing him to three years in prison for harassments. The above ruling can only be construed in conjunction with the decision of the CEDAW Committee (UN Committee monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) of 18 July 2022, where in a case of domestic violence and rape (perpetrated by the agent tasked to conduct investigations on the domestic violence), it condemned Italy for having violated Articles 2 (b)-(d) and (f), 3, 5 and 15 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In any case, Italy is fully aware of the need to closely monitor domestic and gender violence (the judgment keeps account of the progress in our legislation). On this point, the report passed by the Parliamentary Committee investigating femicide at the hearing of 20 April 2022, as well as any form of gender violence, Doc. XXII-bis n.10, of the senate of the Republic, precisely indicated that *“the need to ascertain the size and scope of the phenomenon of secondary victimisation furthermore arises from the awareness that only a coherent answer of all the institutions may hinder the spreading of the endemic phenomenon of domestic and gender violence. Domestic violence cannot be curbed by the relevant criminal legislation and criminal proceedings and its effects ignored in the proceedings on the custody of children or parental responsibility”*.

The recent reforms of the criminal code and the code of criminal procedure (red Code), as well as the civil trial system (Cartabia reform), intend remedying the aforementioned criticalities (see point 3.4).

The Italian legal system also fights against gender violence, which takes shape in the **unlawful activities committed on the internet**.

In terms of prevention, precautionary measures may be taken by specialised judicial police units, (the Postal Police Service) under the instructions of the judicial authorities, in an effort to stop users of the web having access to sites that have unlawful contents. Access to an internet domain is prevented by requiring the internet service provider to take the site offline. The injured party may ask for the unlawful content to be rectified or removed by the site’s data processor or by the National Data Protection Authority, as well as seek redress in the competent civil courts (v. infra).

In terms of evidence collection, our national law maker (Article 347, paragraph 3, of the Code of Criminal Procedure) has envisaged a particularly short time to collect evidence in respect of offences of gender violence, including offences committed on the web (for example hearing the victim within three days from the entry of the offence in the Register of Offences, to ensure a timely investigation on the dynamics of the events; the obligation on the Judicial Police to immediately refer to the Public Prosecutor also orally on the circumstances of the case). These measures show the special attention placed on the victim of the offence and the need for a timely and essentially comprehensive collection of the evidence.

With reference to investigations on the unlawful conducts put in place through the use of internet services, by decree handed down by the Judicial Authority it is possible to get from the providers of the platforms used by the victim or author of the crime, the log files of accesses to the computer systems used to put in place intimidating conducts or by using the holder’s credentials to otherwise unlawfully access, as is often the case, the computer systems in the victim’s place.

In terms of what a victim can do against the holder of the information who has unlawfully processed and published the information or images, and apart from the criminal protection generally afforded

by the national systems in respect of wrongdoings committed by internet providers or by their users, in terms of *private enforcement* a person may protect his/her personal data on the internet by exercising the rights envisaged by Articles 15 and 22 of Regulation (EU 2016/679 on data protection - GDPR). The data subject may file a request with the data controller, without following any specific formalities (e.g., by certified mail, telefax, e-mail, etc.). On the site of the National Data Protection Authority a form is available that may be used to exercise the above-mentioned rights. The request may refer, depending on the needs of the data subject, to specific personal data, data categories or a specific processing, or to all the personal data concerning him/her, no matter how it was processed. The data processing controller shall respond appropriately to the request: - without undue delay, at the latest within 1 month of its receipt - the said deadline may be extended to 2 months, as the need may be depending on the complexity and number of complaints. In such case, the data controller shall in any case inform the data subject within 1 month of receipt of his/her request. Should the data subject find that the processing of his/her data breaches existing provisions or that an answer to his/her request where the data subject is exercising one or more of the rights envisaged by Articles 15-22 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, does not come within the prescribed time or is not satisfactory, then the data subject may seize the competent judicial authority or the National Data Protection Authority. In this latter case the data subject shall lodge a complaint under Article 77 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

In this respect, the **Protocols** put in place by the Prosecuting Offices in the matter of domestic and gender violence, whether committed through the internet or not, are both of use and effective.

It is also important to highlight the continuous interpretation work of both the Supreme and lower Courts in their case law. All the while compliant with the criminal law principles of the strict and detailed description of offences by law and the prohibition to apply the principle of analogy, these courts - in the perspective of a growing use of technological media - have pursued the protection of the fundamental rights which can be breached also by acts of *cyber violence*, by referring explicitly to the principles of the Istanbul Convention.

- the accessibility, responsiveness, competence and gender-sensitivity of legal aid and public defence to the needs of women.

We refer to our answers above or below.

3.2 Policy changes

There is a growing awareness that the Italian legal system has to make a formative effort both in terms of national and supranational (also of soft law) rules and the case law of the Court of cassation and the Strasbourg Court, but also change the cultural structure of gender violence and the ancient and unaware mechanisms that tend to minimise it or blame the victims. In fact, the Istanbul Convention, in terms of offences perpetrated by men against women, requires institutions to first ascertain the relationships of power from which these acts develop and are committed. Otherwise, the risk is not to interpret them correctly, to mitigate them to the point of creating an effect of impunity and tolerance vis a vis their authors.

An investigative Committee has been set up within Parliament on the **secondary victimisation of women suffering violence and their children** in proceedings settling custody and parental responsibility matters (Doc. XXII -bis No.10 of the Senate of the Republic, XXII Legislature). It has carried out a thorough and documented investigation on the causes of femicide, as well as on every form of gender violence. The Committee underscored that in the same legal system it is not possible to tolerate that, on the one hand, the author of violent acts is investigated and convicted for them and, on the other, is considered a suitable parent at par with the parent that suffered the violence before a civil and juvenile court where the said acts are not ascertained and do not have direct consequences on the matter of parental authority. Consequently, we need to ensure that co-ordinated measures be taken, well aware that real effective deterrence to curb acts of domestic

violence is realised when such acts are verified, also and especially within civil and juvenile proceedings instituted to settle questions concerning minors. Should their occurrence, also in the forms of assisted violence, be ascertained before these courts, then there should be immediate repercussions on questions of parental responsibility and custody and restraining measures should be taken against the violent parent.

On this point the Cartabia reform tends to have a new holistic approach in facing the above problems, setting up a family court to amend the traditional and fractioned jurisdiction divided between Ordinary Courts and Juvenile Courts (Article 1, paragraph 28, of Law 206/2021) (see below point 3.4).

3.3 Institutional changes

Women became members of the Judiciary for the first time in 1963, - **Law No. 66 of 9 February 1963** - following the repeal of Law 1176 of 1919, which excluded them from public offices with judicial powers, the exercise of political rights and powers, or offices that concerned the State's military defence. The said milestone was late at coming but it allowed a growing number of women to become magistrates over the years; so much so that their number has exceeded that of men. However, as is the case in different sectors, also within the Judiciary there are less women in key positions. In fact, the number of men far exceeds that of women in top positions, from managerial posts to the members of the Superior Council of the Judiciary.

Today **the number of women exceed that of men in the Judiciary**. For example, in 2020 there were 5,308 women out of a total of 9,787 (54%) magistrates, while there were 4,479 (46%) men. As at 2 March 2022, there are 9,576 magistrates in Italy, including both magistrates that are placed outside the rolls of magistrates exercising the judicial function for any reason, and ordinary magistrates undergoing a training period (MOT - Magistrati Ordinari in Tirocinio). Gender distribution shows a prevalence of women: 4,293 male magistrates and 5,283 female magistrates (accounting for some 55%). The average age of women (49) is lower than that of men (52) by three years. Data clearly shows that although women are over-represented among ordinary magistrates, their number decreases as the importance of the posts increases, from semi-managerial to managerial offices. The 420 magistrates holding managerial posts are not uniformly divided between the two genders. In fact, nearly three magistrates out of four (73%) exercising managerial functions are men. Things are slightly more balanced in terms of semi-managerial functions (Presidents of the Divisions). In this case, nearly five out of ten magistrates exercising the said functions are females (45% out of a total of 722).

The task of establishing all the roles and posts of magistrates falls under the cognisance of the **Superior Council of the Judiciary**, the self-governing body of the Italian Judiciary. The Superior Council of the Judiciary ensures the autonomy and independence of the Judiciary from any other power. The board is currently made of 27 members, of which 24 are elected, as established by **Law No. 44 of 2022**, and 3 are members by operation of law. Out of the first group, 16 members are professional judges, and they are elected by all the ordinary magistrates. The other 8 are lay members, elected by Parliament among university law professors and lawyer that have been practising for at least fifteen years. The members by operation of law are the President of the Republic, who chairs the Superior Council of the Judiciary, the First President of the Supreme Court of cassation and the Prosecutor General of the Supreme Court of cassation and the Prosecutor General of the Supreme Court of cassation. So far there hasn't been any women as members by operation of law of the Superior Council of the Judiciary. As far as the current members of the Council's board are concerned, it is interesting to note that all the 6 women members have been elected by the magistrates and that the share of women among professional judges so far is the highest since 1994 (28.6%), while none of the women currently members of the Superior Council of the Judiciary have been elected by Parliament. On the whole, we can say that our Parliament has shown to be even more reluctant to elect women within the Superior Council of the Judiciary. The

career history of the women elected as members of the Superior Council of the Judiciary shows that only three of them have held prior political posts.

On this point it is important to underscore that although in order to become a magistrate candidates have to pass a public exam, to advance in one's career there are also dynamics that go beyond the merit. On the one hand there are more women than men as magistrates (and analysing the history of candidates who passed the exam since 1965, the number of women for the first time exceeded that of men in 1987, when out of the 300 magistrates 156 women passed the exam and became members of the Judiciary). However, in terms of the leading positions of power, from the presidents of the courts to positions within then Superior Council of the Judiciary, these are predominantly held by men (compare https://www.csm.it/web/csm-internet/statistiche/analisi-e-studi/-/asset_publisher/39latxhTFMDe/content/donne-in-magistratura?inheritRedirect=false).

A magistrate's network of relations plays a fundamental role in career advancement and affects the choice of the Superior Council of the Judiciary in terms of appointments and posts. Its discretionary power could contribute to hinder the presence of women in decision-making positions. That is a criticality often underscored by the Association of Italian Women Magistrates (ADMI)

Lastly, the "Cartabia" reform of the judicial system, passed on 15 June 2022, on the new system for electing the 20 (and no longer 16) professional magistrates members of the Superior Council of the Judiciary, sets forth a new blueprint of the constituencies. There must be not less than 6 candidates for each constituency, and they have to **reflect gender equality A candidate integration mechanism has been introduced when there are less than six candidates or the gender ratio is not complied with. It consists in drawing** the missing candidates among all eligible magistrates who have not previously manifested their unavailability to run. The Supreme Court of cassation on 28 July 2022 drew the missing women magistrates (39 of them).

In terms of women in the legal profession, on 24 January 2022, the first woman was elected as president of the National Bar Association (CNF). Furthermore, the "docu-film" presented by the National Bar Association available on the Cassa Forense YouTube channel, highlights how the *gender pay-gap* within the legal profession is a complex problem: the income gap (average of -40%) results from the difficulty of women to feel free and encouraged to succeed in their profession, to perceive themselves as being endowed with skills and potentialities, not unlike those of their male colleagues. The film wants to "*move the conscience*", to fill the gender gap firstly from a cultural, educational and social, and not only professional, perspective. Within the National Bar Association, efforts have focused on two new projects aimed at improving knowledge and skills of lawyers: a social security **course** for "an informed pension plan" and a **professional course** for "individual empowerment".

From a political perspective, for the first time in history the President of the Senate is a woman, while the first woman Speaker of the House goes back to 1979. The electoral law sets 60% as the maximum percentage for candidates of the same gender in electoral lists, both at the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. Lists are not accepted when this rule is not complied with (Article 1, paragraph 10e) It is important to keep in mind, however, - that increasing the number of women in the institutions does not necessarily mean improving their political weight. A yardstick that has been monitored for years is that of the so-called *key positions*. During the last legislature, 19.23% of key positions at the Chamber of Deputies and 25.58% at the Senate were held by women.

In terms of companies, the same applies to the members of the board of directors of listed (public) companies, where the imposed presence of women does not mean women holding leadership positions. Legislative Decree No 254/2016 - implementing Directive 2014/95/EU as regards disclosure of non-financial and diversity information by certain large undertakings and groups. - has amended Article 123 bis of the Consolidated Text on Finance ("Report on corporate governance and ownership structure") introducing the obligation in the Report on corporate governance and ownership structure, published by listed companies on a yearly basis, to set forth any policies put in place in the matter of diversity in the composition of corporate bodies in terms of age and gender,

and training and career advancement history., as well as a description of the objectives, implementation modalities and outcome of such policies (see Article 123 bis, paragraph 2 d) bis, of the Consolidated Text on Finance). These disclosure obligations are regulated by the so-called “*comply or explain*” principle, whereby when a company does not put in place any policy in the matter of diversity, it will have to clearly substantiate the reasons of such a choice (without prejudice to compliance with the provisions on gender shares). Lastly, Law No.160/2019, paragraph 305, provides for CONSOB (Supervisory Body of the Regulated Market) to annually notify to the Department for Equal Opportunities of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers the outcome of the checks made on the implementation of the new rules on gender shares in listed companies.

The presence of women in leadership positions in Italian enterprises is on the whole limited, although over the last decade there has been significant progress, in particular in terms of companies covered by Law 120/2011. An analysis conducted by CONSOB published last 8 March 2021 (https://www.consob.it/documents/46180/46181/20210308_Ossevatorio.pdf/7f31b28d-b53b-4cdb-9309-d30a7ddb7bcc), showed that the share of women in boards of directors at the beginning of the lapse of time taken under consideration was rather low for all types of companies It was 22% in capital companies and significantly less in listed companies and banks, where respectively it amounted to 7 and 6%. The presence of women in corporate administrative bodies has increased over the years, although differently in the different types of companies. In sectors not bound by gender composition, the share of women in administrative bodies has remained stable (in private companies) or moderately increased (in banks) reaching respectively 24 and 17% in 2019. Rather, in terms of listed companies and publicly controlled companies there has been a considerable increase in the number of women in view of the measures introduced by the Golfo-Mosca Law (shares in 2019 accounted for 37% and 25% respectively). The smaller number of women in the administrative bodies of publicly controlled companies compared to listed companies is in part due firstly to an increase in the number of sole-director companies(38.6% in 2019). In these companies only 10.4% of the CEOs are women, while in companies with a board of directors women account for 27.4% of the directors.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

The High School of the Judiciary has provided several courses over time, addressed to the professional updating of magistrates, focusing on **gender-based violence** and the risk of secondary victimisation of women in the later stage. In the framework of course P21067 delivered in 2021 the findings were that in the majority of prosecutor’s offices, even the best-staffed ones, according to a survey conducted in 2019, (hence before the introduction of the so-called Red Code Law) crimes of violence against women were not prosecuted by magistrates specialised in the field. This led to the rise of different practices in the investigation stage. (see https://www.scuolamagistratura.it/web/portalesm/leggi-e-regolamenti/-/document_library/UNfqaZviL2by/view_file/2789887).

This is why when **Law No. 69 of 2019 (Red Code)** was passed, in the aftermath of the entry into force of the new provisions, several prosecuting offices across Italy adopted and made available their Guidelines, with a view to offering practical advice to practitioners. These documents, highly valued by the community of the judiciary and law enforcement authorities, also gain importance among non-experts, prompting observers to focus on multiple aspects of the issue. An authoritative analysis of the amendments introduced by Law No. 69 of 2019 is included in Report No. 62/2019, edited by the Court of Cassation, *Ufficio del Massimario*.

As to criminal law, the Red Code introduces four new crimes in the Criminal Code: disfigurement of a person’s face through permanent injuries (new Article 583-quinquies of the Criminal Code), punished by imprisonment from 8 to 14 years. When the commission of this crime results in murder, the penalty is life imprisonment. Still, the reform includes this new type of crime in the list of voluntary crimes giving rise to compensation from the state, the crime unlawful dissemination of images or videos without the consent of the person depicted (the so-called revenge porn,

introduced in Article 612-ter of the Criminal Code after the crime of stalking), punished by imprisonment from 1 to 6 years and a fine from 5,000 to 15,000 euro; the punishment shall also apply to anyone who, having received or anyhow acquired the images or videos, disseminates them with a view to damaging the persons concerned. The conduct is aggravated if the acts are committed within an emotional relationship, even if ceased, or with the use of computer tools, the offence of coercion or the offence of inducement to marriage (Article 558-bis of the Criminal Code), punished by imprisonment from 1 to 5 years. The conduct is aggravated when the crime is committed to the detriment of minors and is prosecuted when act is committed abroad by, or to the detriment of, an Italian national or a foreigner residing in Italy. The offence of violation of removal from the family home and prohibition of approaching places attended by the injured person (Article 387-bis), punished by imprisonment from 6 months to 3 years. Still, with further amendments to the Criminal Code, Law No. 69 of 2019 provides for changes to the crime of mistreatments against family members and cohabitants (Article 572 of the Criminal Code) aimed at: tightening the punishment, introducing a special aggravated type of offence (punishment increased up to a half) when the offence is committed at the presence of or to the detriment of persons under age, a pregnant woman or a person with disabilities, or if the fact is committed with weapons, always taking into account the minor who witnesses the mistreatment as a person offended by the crime. What's more, the crime of mistreatments against family members and cohabitants is included in the list of crimes in respect of which the application of preventive measures against suspects is permitted, including the prohibition from approaching places attended by persons to be protected. Amendments are also made to crime of persecutory acts: (Article 612 bis of the Criminal Code), by increasing punishments, crimes of sexual violence (Article 609 bis et seq. of the Criminal Code) by increasing punishments and extending the time granted to the injured person to file a complaint (from the current 6 months to 12 months). Furthermore, the Red Code redefines and tightens the aggravating circumstances when sexual violence is committed to the detriment of minors (Article 609 quater of the Criminal Code) with the provision of an aggravating circumstance (penalty increased by up to one third) when the acts are committed with minors under the age of 14 in exchange for money or any other utility, even if only promised. This crime is now prosecutable ex officio, whereas in respect of the crime of murder, the scope of application of aggravating circumstances is broadened by introducing murder aggravated by personal relationships. Finally, by amending Article 165 of the Criminal Code, the Red Code stipulates that the granting of suspended sentences for crimes of domestic and gender-based violence be made conditional on participation in specific rehabilitation programmes.

In addition, **Law No. 134 of 27 September 2021**, on Delegation to the Government for the efficiency of the justice system in criminal matters as well as in restorative justice and provisions for early settlement of judicial proceedings, in its final stage of implementation, includes provisions on criminal protection (substantial and procedural alike) of victims of gender-based violence and marks a further step towards the long way to adapting domestic legislation to the standards imposed at European level on the protection of gender-based violence (in particular, by Directive No. 2012/29/UE on aspects of procedural relevance). These provisions also apply the scope of application of the rules introduced by Law No. 69 of 2019 to the victims of crimes provided for in attempted form and victims of attempted murder.

More specifically, the scope of application of a set of procedural guarantees is broadened to include all **“red flag offences” committed in the attempted form**: 1. Article 90-ter (1-bis) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, covering notifications on release orders and termination of the custodial security measure, as well as on the escape of the defendant made to the victim and relevant defence lawyer, if any (paragraph 11 lett. A); 2. Article 659 (2 bis) of the Code of Criminal Procedure whereby following an order by the supervising judge the release of the person has to be ordered, the public prosecutor in charge of the execution shall immediately notify, by means of the judicial police, the victim and if appointed, their defence lawyer (paragraph 11, lett. D); 3. Article 362 (1 ter) of the Code of Criminal Procedure ruling the taking of information by the public prosecutor from the victim and the person who filed the complaint, claim or petition, within the period of three days from the

registration of the crime notice, unless unavoidable needs for the protection of minors under eighteen years of age or the confidentiality of investigations are in place, also in the interest of victims (paragraph 11, lett. B); 4. Article 370 (2 bis) of the Code of Criminal Procedure whereby judicial police promptly carries out the acts the prosecutor delegated to them (paragraph 11, lett. C); 5. Article 64 bis implementing provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, covering the notification of copies of a series of acts laid down therein (paragraph 12) to the civil court for the purposes of settling cases on personal separation of spouses or proceedings relating to under-age children or the exercise of parental responsibility; 6. Article 165 (2) of the of Criminal Code making the suspended sentence conditional on participation in specific rehabilitation programmes at institutions or association engaged in prevention, psychological care and recovery of individuals convicted of the same crimes (paragraph 13). In this first group of provisions paragraph 15 should also be added: it provides for mandatory arrest for the crime referred to in Article 387 bis of the Criminal Code, i.e., for the crime of removal from the family home and the prohibition from approaching places attended by the victim.

The Cartabia reform is indeed part of a cultural and social shift towards making gender equality effective.

The Senate report referred to above reads verbatim that *“A careful inquiry of specialised nature to ascertain whether domestic violence has taken place in cases of separation with custody or in proceedings governing parental responsibility stands out among the major criticalities. Unfortunately, the study and in particular the examination of representative cases, has shown that too often domestic violence is mistaken for couple conflict and hence mothers victim of violence who protect their children from abusive parents are accused of being “alienating parents. Hence, references to non-scientific concepts and unsubstantiated interpretations, that is, not inferred from a sound diagnostic path defined and shared by the academic community should be excluded in assessing parenting capacity, in particular any reference and use of the so-called parental alienation syndrome (PAS) or parental alienation (PA) or similar concepts should be excluded alike. Corollary to this recommendation is the exclusion of any form of course or treatment inspired by de-conditioning/conditioning towards minors”*. This approach is in line with the one recently indicated by the same Court of Cassation, whereby for the purposes of modifying custody arrangements, the court on the merits is required to establish the truthfulness of the said conducts, resorting to the common means of evidence, including court experts’ opinions and assumptions, regardless of the abstract evaluation on the scientific validity or invalidity of the referred syndrome, taking into account that among the requirements of parental eligibility, the ability to preserve the continuity of parental relations with the other parent is also relevant, in order to protect the child’s right to co-parenting and balanced and harmonious upbringing (Cass. Division 1, Order No. 13217 of 17 May 2021).

3.5 Other pertinent developments

In implementing European Directive No. 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, the Ministry of Justice set an inter-institutional working group to discuss “general services” to support all victims of crime, which includes among its participants besides the Department for Justice Affairs in its capacity as co-ordinator, the Department for Juvenile and Community Justice, representatives of the National Forensic Council, the State-Region Conference, the Ministry of the Interior, the third sector - Dafne Network - and Roma Tre University. In 2021, the Regions and the autonomous provinces of Trento and Bolzano were invited, also in consortium or partnership form, to submit “ad hoc project proposals for the development of public services to provide support to the victims of crime, also in a complementary and integrated form with the already introduced or submitted measures in the framework of the regional/provincial planning and possibly in line of continuity” with those already put in place by the Cassa delle Ammende. 1,914,969.90 euros have been allocated to the 11 Regions having submitted relevant projects. The use of resources already allotted to Regions is currently subject to scrutiny. In 2022, on 18 July 2022 a call for proposals was published on the Ministry of Justice

website to implement public services for the support of victims of any types of crime and the promotion of restorative justice programmes. The amount allocated is 1,508,503.01 euros. Restorative justice was included, in line with the choices made by lawmakers on criminal delegation, on top of the transposition of European Directive no. 2012/29/EU.

This Agreement aims at co-ordinating the measures put in place for the protection of the victims of crime and the development of programmes of restorative justice and establish a service network to meet the needs of victims of crime and ensure uniform qualitative standards in the delivery of services by the administration of justice, though actions intended to:

A) monitoring the initiatives aimed at establishing and strengthening services for the protection of victims of crime and the development of restorative justice, already funded by the parties with the respective budgetary funds, ensuring that services be delivered uniformly across the country;

B) co-ordinating measures aimed at establishing and strengthening services for the protection of victims of crime and for the development restorative justice, which have already been funded by the parties;

C) identify and make arrangement for the delivery of integrated training courses for practitioners to facilitate the development of a network of services aimed at supporting victims of crime and delivering restorative justice actions to ensure uniform quality standards in the delivery of services by the administration of justice;

D) promote raising awareness campaigns, including through the involvement of education institutes and universities in the forms prescribed by law, on the protection of victims and prevention of violent behaviour, as well as initiatives aimed at seeking restorative justice practices in the settlement of disputes;

E) develop information campaigns to promote funding initiatives and making “**Re-Agire Portal**” known to the public, the first national portal providing information and support for victims of any type of crimes, in co-operation with Roma Tre University and the National Research Centre - Institute of Legal Informatics and Judicial Systems.

The website offers, through its pages, targeted information and guidance, directing visitors to clear and accessible paths to assistance services provided across the national territory. Thus, the website is meant to be a national hub for information. All contents made available to users should make it possible to: raise the overall awareness of the forms of protection available to all the subjects falling within the scope of the legislation at issue, provide the basic information to effectively exercise the referred forms of protection, also by simplifying their participation in any proceedings, provide a comprehensive overview of the avenues - judicial and not - that the victims may be involved in, so as to offer a clear scenario of the options that may be available and make likely predictions as to the possible outcome, help liaise with organisations - both public and private - across Italy, also with a view to facilitating access to victim support service (Article 8, Directive 2012/29/EU), introduce victims to the specific assistance services reserved, free of charge and active in the territory, before, during and for an adequate period of time after the conclusion of the criminal proceedings, direct the victim who suffered a crime abroad to manage emerging situations, if any, and the resulting obligations, both in the territory of the country where they are temporarily staying and upon their return to Italy, provide an information hub to locate the different type of specialists who come in contact with the victim in various capacities throughout the proceeding, also with a view to filling any gaps in individual training, improve the interaction between victim and competent authorities from the first contacts, thus helping to streamline access to justice and reduce any form of inter-ethnic injustice and avert the risk of secondary victimisation.

No matter how the Agreement is aimed at protecting all victims of crime, is it clear that the system put in place to strengthen preventive and restorative protection tools, will largely benefit women victims of gender-based violence.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

As for actions to promote fundamental rights and freedoms, particular attention has been paid in recent years to interventions aimed at implementing Article 51 of the Constitution on equal access of women and men to elected positions, by affecting the electoral systems at the different levels (national, regional, local and European Parliament).

In the last legislative cycles, the Italian Parliament has approved regulatory measures aimed at promoting gender balance at the local, regional, national and European levels (Law No. 215/2012 for municipal elections; Law No. 56/2014 for elections - at the second level - of metropolitan and provincial councils; Law No. 20/2016 for elections to regional councils; Law No. 165/2017 for elections to Parliament; Law No. 65/2014 for Italian representation in the European Parliament). Measures promoting equal opportunities have also been introduced in the most recent measures concerning the regulation of political parties.

4.2 Policy changes

The National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026, already mentioned, starting from data analysis, focuses on the following five strategic priorities: work, income, skills, time, power. For each of the priorities, the Strategy defines interventions to be taken (including measures of a cross-cutting nature), as well as related indicators (aimed at measuring the main aspects of gender inequality) and targets (specific and measurable objectives to be achieved). The indicators and targets serve to guide governmental action and monitor the effectiveness of measures implemented.

These measures have been and will be implemented by the central Administrations, Regions and Local Authorities, on the basis of their institutional competences, taking into account the reference sector and the nature of the intervention. The Conference of the Regions and the Union of Provinces and Municipalities will also be permanently involved.

In particular the Strategy is aimed at pursuing the following goals:

- identifying good practices to combat gender stereotypes;
- closing the gender gap in the labour market;
- achieving equality in participation in different economic sectors;
- addressing the pay and pension gap;
- achieving gender balance in decision-making.

The long-term goal of the Strategy is to gain 5 points in the ranking of the EIGE Gender Equality Index in the next 5 years, to rank better than the European average by 2026, with the aim of being among the top 10 European countries in 10 years.

Funding provides an increase of EUR 5 million, starting from the year 2022, in the Fund for Rights and Equal Opportunities Policies.

4.3 Institutional changes

As already mentioned, in order to strengthen the governance of the 2021-2026 Strategy, the 2022 Budget Law (Article 1, paragraphs 139-148, Law No. 234/2021) has provided for the establishment at the Department for Equal Opportunities of an inter-institutional Steering Committee and a National Observatory for the integration of gender equality policies.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

As already mentioned, by Decree of 22 April 2021 the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family set up a Working Group at the Department for Equal Opportunities on issues relating to the rebalancing of gender representation in institutions and the revision of appointment and election

procedures, as well as to support the evaluation of measures introduced to protect equal opportunities.

The WG, composed of nine university professors in the fields of constitutional law, public law and comparative public law, was assigned the task of carrying out in-depth studies and drafting proposals, including legislative ones, aimed at rebalancing gender representation in institutions and revising appointment and election procedures.

The outcomes of the WG are provided in a Working Paper published on 1 December 2021.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

Due to the strong linkage between the conditions of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls and their higher risk to be victims of exploitation and trafficking, the new National Anti-Trafficking Action Plan (NAP) 2022-2025 is worth of mentioning.

The Plan aims to define 'multi-year intervention strategies for preventing and combating the phenomenon of trafficking and the severe exploitation of human beings, as well as actions aimed at awareness raising, social prevention, emergence, and social integration of victims.

With this goal, the Minister for Equal Opportunities and the Family presents NAP to the Council of Ministers, granting the continuity of government action on combating the phenomenon of human trafficking.

The strategic objective of the new NAP is to improve - according to a uniform approach at the European level - the national response to the phenomenon of trafficking, acting with respect for human rights and the principle of non-discrimination, according to a gender mainstreaming perspective, the protection of the rights of minors, women and more generally of vulnerable groups.

With the Plan's operational actions, the Department for Equal Opportunities intends to provide positive and concrete responses to the priority strategic objectives for the three years 2022-2025 by identifying appropriate interventions and resources to combat the phenomenon; implementing initiatives and good practice policies in continuity with what has been carried out under the previous Plan; seeking to provide increasingly victim-oriented responses, in line with European recommendations on the issue.

The elaboration of the NAP has been set up in coherence with the four guidelines on which, at the international level, strategies for combating human trafficking are based, namely prevention, prosecution, protection, partnership (prevention, prosecution of crime, protection, and social integration, co-operation).

In addition, it is also of fundamental importance to strengthen the co-operation between the institutional level and the private social sector, which is an indefectible element in the construction of the Italian strategy, to maintain and strengthen the integrated public and private networks operating in the territories, oriented to the so-called "multi-agency work".

In the context of the implementation of [EM.as.com](https://em.as.com) (**Empowerment Asylum Commission**) project – signed by the National Asylum Commission with the European Commission, started on 1 September 2019 with the partnership of UNHCR – launched on **1 September 2019** with the priority aim of strengthening the National Asylum system, the Sub-Actions 6 and 7 of the project provide activities for the implementation of co-ordination mechanisms in order to enhance the identification of victims of gender-based violence (Action 6) and of trafficking (Action 7) among asylum-seekers and

to facilitate referral mechanisms between the Territorial Commissions (TCs) and the organisations specialised in providing assistance and protection to victims.

In the framework of **sub-action 6**, the development of good practices was envisaged through the realisation of standard operating procedures (SOPs), addressed to TC's staff for the correct identification and *referral* of potential victims of gender-based violence, published in December 2021 and presented in a national online event on 31 March 2022, now available at the link <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/pubblicazioni/pubblica-te-procedure-operative-standard-lemersione-e-referral-delle>

The SOP's facilitate TC's staff to recognise potential GBV survivors among asylum seekers with a set of indicators and promote the activation of a standard *referral* procedure between Territorial Commissions and anti-violation associations, in order to facilitate the awareness by applicants of their victim status and to allow, through a reporting mechanism, the establishment of contact between the victim and the assistance and protection services on the territory.

In order to implement SOPs NAC and UNHCR carried on several training activities with TC's and monitoring missions.

Furthermore, in May 2022 NAC started the data collection of the potential victim of gender-based violence identified by TCs in the first of the year 2022, with the detail of gender, nationality, age, form of violence. The data collection will be periodically repeated in order to collect updated data.

On 20 December 2021 the Ministry of Interior, Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration, signed a **Memorandum of Understanding** with the following women associations: Rete per le Parita, Le Contemporanee, il Consiglio Nazionale Donne Italiane, Soroptimist International. The agreement, aimed at supporting women fleeing Afghanistan and their families, remained active until 30 June.

In 2022, the work of the **Vulnerability Working Group** continues. Members of the group are representatives from the Central Directorate of Civil Services for Immigration and Asylum, the Ministry of Health, The National Institute for Health, Migration and Poverty (NIHMP), Red Cross, the Central Service for the Management of SAI, the International Agencies UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF, EUAA, and the NGO Doctors Without Borders (MSF). In addition, the group includes the participation of institutions involved in the hotspot standard operating procedures (Department of Public Security, Harbour Master and Guardia di Finanza Command, Frontex, Europol) and the European Commission. The first main output of the working group is a Vademecum containing information and procedures for the detection, referral and care of vulnerable persons, included women and girls. The Vademecum will be available and disseminated among all the operators involved in the reception of people arriving on Italian territory.

Adoption of the **National Plan for UAMs** (March 2022): the plan aims to provide guidelines for the management of unaccompanied minors who arrived in the national territory as a result of the war in Ukraine. The national plan has been updated and expanded with a component dedicated to the management of possible phenomena of disappearance and to anti-trafficking prevention activities.

5.3 Institutional changes

At the national level, the Plan's governance structure is articulated as follows:

- a Steering Committee which involves competent political authorities and all central and local administrations involved on the issue of trafficking and serious exploitation of human beings;
- a Technical Committee supporting the Steering Committee for the drafting and implementation of the National Action Plan against trafficking and serious exploitation of human beings.

The co-ordinating role of the national level is ensured by the Department for Equal Opportunities, It is foreseen to set up tables or working groups to examine specific issues in depth.

Considering that the cross-cutting nature of the public competencies involved covers the multiple levels of government, the Plan must pursue the path of empowerment and involvement - particularly in the protection of victims - of territorial authorities as proximity authorities concerning the management of the phenomenon and as holders of structural fund resources that can, in a complementary way, enhance the national resources made available.

Also, the National Anti-Trafficking Observatory, set up by the Department for Equal Opportunities, operates as an observation and monitoring body to assess the phenomenon in a constant and up-to-date manner, supporting policies to prevent and combat trafficking and contributing to the planning of operational strategies to be translated into positive and concrete actions.

During 2022, the Department of Civil Liberties and Immigration continued updating and enhancing the tools developed to monitor the quality of the services provided in reception centres. DCLI - with the support of EUAA - is working on the drafting of questionnaires in digital format that will facilitate the work of Prefectures and the Ministry of the Interior in the management and monitoring of the reception system.

In line with national legislation and Directive 2013/33/EU on reception, the questionnaires are hinged on a series of indicators aimed at defining the quality of the provided services and goods also considering gender diversity. Moreover, the questionnaires will contain an indicator specifically dedicated to vulnerabilities, including for the purpose of assessing specific conditions of fragility, including sexual and gender-based violence.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

The implementation of the Plan could further count upon the Anti-Trafficking Helpline (800 290 290), established in 2000 by the Department for Equal Opportunities, active 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, free of charge, anonymous and allowing contact with multilingual specialised personnel.

In addition to its emersion and reporting functions, the toll-free number also performs a public management and data collection activity by holding and developing information, and is now increasingly committed, in a third-party position with respect to ongoing projects, to carrying out systemic action, collecting particularly those data and interventions through the SIRIT (*Sistema Informatizzato per la raccolta di informazioni sulla tratta*) system, following the recommendations from GRETA and the monitoring bodies of the Council of Europe and other international bodies such as OSCE. The SIRIT system is fed by data of the entities owners/implementers of the assistance and social protection projects for victims of trafficking and exploitation, co-financed by the Department for Equal Opportunities pursuant to Article 18 of Legislative Decree No. 286/1998 and Article 13 of Law No. 228/2003.

In the framework of the above mentioned EMAS project, sub-action 6, NAC and UNHCR developed information materials on GBV (flyers and posters in five languages) to be share in TC's locals in order to facilitate the awareness by applicants of their victim status and to give an immediate help to those who are in danger (anti-violence number 1522 managed by Department for Equal Opportunity). The flyers are online available at the link <http://www.libertaciviliimmigrazione.dlci.interno.gov.it/it/documentazione/pubblicazioni/pubblicazione-procedure-operative-standard-lemersione-e-referral-delle>

The National Asylum Commission – Ministry of the Interior constantly promotes several activities, in order to implement best practices within the asylum system.

In the context of the competence of the National Asylum Commission to promote constantly and to co-ordinate the training and refreshing courses for Territorial Commissions' members, several training activities are focused on thematic issues in order to:

- 1- facilitate the prompt identification of victims of trafficking, also enhancing a referral mechanism between TCs and the anti-trafficking projects;
- 2- improve members' territorial Commissions expertise, skills and techniques in interviewing minors, LGBTI and vulnerable persons among asylum seekers.

In fact, every year, in collaboration with EUAA , an high number of courses are organised on relevant issues, even using EUAA modules such as: "Trafficking in Human Beings", "Gender, Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation" "Interviewing Children" and "Interviewing Vulnerable persons".

Moreover, in the context of the activities carried on by NAC in collaboration with UNHCR in the framework of the project **EM.as.com, specific training activities** on GBV and monitoring missions were held in the first part of 2022 in order to implement the SOPs recently published and to promote the start of co-operation between TCs and anti-violence associations.

In order to ensure the capacity of a timely assessment of persons with special needs within the reception system, through the collaboration of UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM, a thematic training has been prepared for the benefit of those working in the asylum reception system (first-line reception facilities and hotspot). The online training includes several thematic and in-depth contents, such as:

- general notions on international protection and access to services for refugees and asylum seekers, unaccompanied foreign minors and persons with special needs, including vulnerability identification and referral procedures;
- knowledge on how to provide initial support to survivors of **gender-based violence**.

The initiative has been drawn to the attention of all the Prefectures with Circular letter No. 36236 of 19 November 2021 requesting to promote it among staff working in reception centres. The e-learning course will remain available throughout 2022.

In April 2022, to support people fleeing war in Ukraine, 2 support centres (Blue Dot) for minors, women, families and people with special needs were opened in Friuli Venezia Giulia, at the Ferneti (Trieste) and Tarvisio (Udine) border crossings. The Blue Dots are safe places where specialised staff provide legal information and orientation to the services available on the Italian territory and provide support in case of gender-based violence and to potential victims of trafficking. Moreover, first psycho-social support is offered to children and to those in need. The project is implemented by UNHCR, UNICEF, Save the Children, Stella Polare, Di.Re (Women Network Against Violence), ARCI, in co-ordination with the Italian Border Authorities.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

By Legislative Decree No. 116 of 12 September 2018, No. 116 gender budgeting was strengthened, emphasising that this tool should be used as an information basis to promote gender equality through public policies, giving greater transparency in the allocation of resources and carrying out an analysis of the effects of these policies according to gender and redefining and reallocating resources accordingly, in line with fair and sustainable welfare indicators (BES) included in the Economic and Financial Document (DEF).

In the fifth edition of the Report to the Italian Parliament on Gender Budgeting of 27 December 2021 it is highlighted that interventions aimed at reducing gender gaps adopted in 2020 through the Budget Law and related measures mainly concern the reconciliation of private and working life and the fight against gender-based violence, but there are also several measures related to: labour protection, welfare and assistance, maternity protection and support, participation in economic, political and administrative decision-making processes, education and interventions against gender

stereotypes, health, lifestyle and safety, and the labour market. Some measures were adopted *ex novo*, while others are an extension of previous measures.

Moreover, as of 8 March 2021 the Study Service of the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament started a pilot gender impact analysis as a key-document to be included in the dossiers on bills examined by the Chamber itself, precisely requesting 'to evaluate the opportunity to provide, on an experimental and selective basis, within the documentation dossiers prepared by the Study Service, on draft laws under consideration by the permanent commissions, the drafting of a paragraph dedicated to gender impact analysis'.

Among the challenges concerning the gender budgeting functioning there are the following ones:

- integrate gender budgeting into a strategic framework of gender equality goals and to this scope the issue has been included in the first National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026;

- consolidating gender budgeting by moving beyond the current pilot and integrating the gender perspective (gender mainstreaming) into the budgeting process, thus enhancing its potential impact. From this point of view, in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) one of the targets of the reform concerning the spending review stipulates that the 2024 Budget Law should introduce a classification of the planned items according to criteria underpinning the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda, with regard to gender budgeting and environmental budgeting.

6.2 Policy changes

The National Strategy for Gender Equality 2021-2026 is inspired by an holistic mainstreaming approach. The ambition defines in a quantitative and measurable way the overall goal in terms of progress on gender equality, using the ranking as calculated by EIGE and the score given to each European country following the assessment of multiple dimensions in line with the five strategic priorities of the Strategy. This ambition defines a global goal in terms of total score («gain 5 points ») and a specific goal with respect to other European countries, both within the Strategy's timeframe («to outperform the European average by 2026 ») and in subsequent years («to be among the top 10 in 10 years »). In fact, the Strategy intends to outline initiatives that will lead to a significant improvement for the country and reaffirm its leading role at European level.

The NRRP envisages interventions aimed at implementing the principle of gender equality, not forgetting, at the same time, to enhance education and support for families.

Specifically, the Plan implements the principle of gender equality along two different levels, e.g., the implementation of specific and cross-cutting actions. As for the latter ones measures to improve childcare services are of particular importance. Specific actions include the introduction of gender equality certification, the creation of women's enterprises, the provision of 0-6 education services as well as the STEM projects.

In addition, a series of conditionalities for companies are introduced, aimed at encouraging the hiring of women and young people.

Moreover, the Plan provides for the introduction of additional measures in the calls for tenders, in the form of additional points, to be awarded to those economic operators that guarantee the adoption of measures aimed at meeting the aforementioned equality requirements.

6.3 Institutional changes

As already mentioned, in order to strengthen the governance of the 2021-2026 Strategy, the 2022 Budget Law (Article 1, Paragraphs 139-148, Law No. 234/2021) provided the establishment at the Department for Equal Opportunities of an inter-institutional Steering Committee and a National Observatory for the Integration of Gender Equality Policies.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Among the most relevant aspects, addressed through a positive policy approach, the following ones should be mentioned:

- data and evidence from periodic statistical surveys on different sectoral issues;
- indications coming from various supranational systems concerning equal opportunities through legislative and regulatory instruments to be implemented at the national level.

With regard to these measures, it is important to underline their complementary relevance for the definition of national policies and interventions to concretely promote gender equality: all quantitative contextualisation processes, also in order to identify the problems inherent to women's working conditions and the need to harmonise working and living times, allows for a preventive assessment of the impact of national and local legislative measures with a view to targeted intervention to overcome critical issues.

In the definition of its policies, the Department for Equal Opportunities has always promoted an approach aimed at involving a plurality of stakeholders in order to feed broad and participatory processes for the development of interventions and shared actions to promoting equal opportunities, women's empowerment and combating gender-based discrimination.

The establishment of Steering Committees and Working Groups has been an useful tool to promote a constant dialogue with stakeholders for example for the definition and implementation of the National Plan on Male Violence against Women or the National Action Plan against Trafficking. All bodies have ensured the adoption of a multidisciplinary approach in the drafting of their respective policies, encompassing both public and private actors.

To this scope the Call of expression of interest issued by the Department for Equal Opportunities in July 2020 was structured to identify at national level associations engaged in the promotion of equal opportunities and gender equality and in activities to counter gender-based discrimination, in order to draw up an agenda of interventions and actions for women's empowerment and to submit proposals for the promotion of equal opportunities and gender equality. Following the conclusion of the Call, all the associations that took part in it were included in a special Register, which allows the Department, among other things, to transmit any useful information to their attention and to receive adequate feedback, where there is a participatory dialogue requiring the direct involvement of civil society.

Latvia

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Ministry of Welfare in co-operation with NGO “Centre MARTA” in October 2022 organised workshops and discussions for young people on how to build non-violent and respectful relationships based on the principle of gender equality. Four workshops for young people aged 15 to 19 were held in different cities of Latvia, during which, with the help of informal education methods, youth mentors from “Centre MARTA” talked about healthy relationship building, harmful gender stereotypes and how to recognise discrimination and violent behaviour in a relationship.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes.

On 17 February 2022, amendments to the law “On Police” came into force, which allow police officers to take a decision to separate a person who poses a threat from a victim without a written application of the victim. Additionally, police officers inform municipal social service institutions in all cases where the risk of violence threats has been identified whether or not a police decision on the separation is taken (for example, if the risk of violence has been identified, but the protected person refuses to write an application so that the police can take a decision on the separation). Until this, a police officer could take a decision on separation only on the basis of a written application of the victim of domestic violence.

The **Ministry of Justice** at the end of 2022 will organise a discussion at the Permanent Working Group on the Criminal Law with an aim to review possible overlap of the Criminal law sections 164 (involvement into prostitutions), 165.1 (sending for sexual exploitation), 166 parts 3, 4 and 5 (pornography). The aim of the assessment is to understand if it is necessary to change some formulation of these sections in order to better strengthen prosecutions and convictions related to trafficking in human beings. For example, these sections have regulation on the involvement of minors in prostitutions, thus assessing if these case should be qualified as trafficking in human beings.

This task has been initiated pursuant to the GRETA (the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings) recommendation raised already in the first evaluation round [para 169 and 170] (<https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=0900001680631cbc>).

2.2 Policy changes

The new Action Plan Against Trafficking in human beings 2021 – 2023 was adopted on 28 September 2021 (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/326420-par-cilveku-tirdzniecibas-noversanas-planu-2021-2023-gadam>).

For the period in 2022 it is important to mention an overarching national plan to support the people fleeing from the war in Ukraine (<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/332025-par-pasakumu-planu-atbalstasniegsanas-ukrainas-civiliedzivotajiem-latvijas-republika>). This plan also enclosed some action related to prevention and early detection of possible cases of trafficking in human beings, in particular, the awareness rising leaflets for people entering from Ukraine, and the procedures on early detection general prevention of trafficking in human beings among people fleeing from the war in Ukraine were included in the plan. Activities related to trafficking in human beings have been already implemented.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

On 19 August 2022 the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia published the results of a survey conducted in 2021 on personal safety and exposure to undesirable behaviour in the workplace, society, partnerships, family and childhood. Data showed that every fourth woman (25.1%) and every fifth man (19.5%) aged 18-74 in Latvia have experienced physical or sexual violence. Survey also showed that every third (30.1%) woman has experienced psychological, physical or sexual violence or a combination of several forms of violence while in a relationship. This is the first time such a survey has been conducted in Latvia and the data obtained will help to create a more comprehensive understanding about the current situation and to develop more targeted support mechanisms for victims of violence.

In November 2022 Ministry of Welfare launched an information campaign on psychological violence called “Psychological Violence – Invisible but Real”. The aim of the campaign is to draw public attention to the devastating impact of psychological violence in family relationships. It is essential to promote a common understanding of the phenomenon of psychological violence and to encourage victims to seek help. Campaign consists of various media activities (posters, video advertisements on social media and on state TV and radio, as well as informative opinion pieces on psychological violence – how to recognise it and where to seek help) and it will continue until 16 December 2022.

The **Ministry of Interior of Latvia** is carrying out two projects that are contributing to the reduction to trafficking in human beings, including as regards exploitation of women and girls.

In **project CAPE “Competence building, Assistance provision and Prosecution of labour Exploitation cases in the Baltic Sea region”** in 2021 the ministry of the interior of Latvia procured an evaluation of the transnational referral mechanisms of trafficking in human beings. In particular, assessing the needs of professionals and victims who refer from one country to another. As the result of this evaluation, it is planned to do necessarily improvements for the Transnational Referral Mechanism of the Baltic Sea Region. The results will also contribute to safer international referral of women and girls.

Link: <http://www.trafficking.lv/en/competence-building-assistance-provision-and-prosecution-of-labour-exploitation-cases-in-the-baltic-sea-region-cape>

The second project ELECT THB “Enhanced Law Enforcement Co-operation and Training on Trafficking in Human Beings” aims to strengthen co-operation of law enforcement and other controlling institutions to detect and stop cases of labour exploitation and sexual exploitation. In 2022, three member of the project – Estonia, Finland and Latvia – are doing the research on the modus operandi in organisation of trafficking in these countries. To have broader perspective of the situation, another research is also done in Poland by the organisation La Strada. In addition, project partners collect information on the best practices in detection and investigation THB cases. On a basis of the research, a new training model for investigators, prosecutors and judges will be developed and carried about with a number of trainings in Finland, Estonia and Latvia. Besides, an international workshop dedicated to the topic of trafficking of human beings for the purposes for sexual exploitation.

Link: https://heuni.fi/-/elect_thb

On 5 September 2022 Latvian Centre for Judicial Training together with the Council of Europe launched HELP Online Training on Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence for Latvian legal professionals. Developed together with the Gender Equality Division of the Council of Europe the course will include modules on understanding violence against women and domestic violence, international and European legal framework, access to justice, criminal justice response, civil justice response and alternative dispute resolution.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising e

On 22 June 2022, the Latvian **Women's NGO Network presented Women's Leadership award** for those women whose leadership at regional level has made a significant contribution to society in general. A total of six awards were presented – five for women leaders in historical Latvian regions of Riga, Kurzeme, Zemgale, Vidzeme and Latgale, and one for a female leader for Latvian diaspora.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

In 2022, the State Police Management task on **the Action Plan for the Prevention of Risks of Trafficking in Human Beings in Relation to the Entry of Ukrainian Civilians into Latvia** was issued. The aim of the Action Plan is to prevent the involvement of persons, especially civilians from Ukraine, who have fled the war, in trafficking in human beings. In order to facilitate immediate action to detect, prevent and prosecute the risks of trafficking in human beings, the following actions and measures shall be implemented:

- Include border areas in secondment routes. Patrol routes should include areas known to house or reside Ukrainian civilians (support and assistance centres, childcare facilities, guest houses, hotels, service hotels, social housing, etc.), paying attention to suspects and vehicles.
- When ensuring the specified routes of assignment, pay special attention to inbound and outbound vehicles with both foreign registration numbers and Latvian state registration numbers, especially vehicles intended for transporting a larger number of people (buses, minibuses). Carry out suspensions and inspections to determine whether they contain minors or adults who are or may be involved in any form of trafficking in human beings and who are victims of trafficking in human beings.
- When receiving information on an incident involving the entry or maintenance threat to the civilian population of Ukraine (or suspected trafficking in human beings), assess the available resources and send the appropriate resources to the scene.
- Ensure co-operation with local authorities, including the Support Centre, and non-governmental organisations to facilitate the exchange of information between authorities and to co-ordinate preventive actions to address the risks of trafficking in Ukrainian civilians.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

On 1 August 2022, amendments to the Labour Law came into force, that foresees employer's obligation to grant carers leave without maintenance of pay, if it is requested by an employee who needs to provide personal care or support to a spouse, parent, child, or other close family member who needs care or support for a serious medical reason.

To promote father's involvement in childcare, according to the amendments to the Labour Law, the father of a child is entitled to paternity leave of 10 working days. Paternity leave shall be granted immediately after the birth of the child, but not later than six months from the birth of the child.

Starting from 1 January 2023, amendments to the Law on Maternity and Sickness Insurance foresee that the parent is entitled to choose the total period of the parental benefit, which consists

of the period in which the parent receives parental benefit and the non-transferable part of the parental benefit period, which is two calendar months for each parent. It is possible to choose one of the following periods of the parental benefit:

1) 19 months, from which 15 months from the day of the birth of the child may be used until the day when the child reaches the age of 1.5 years, but the non-transferable part, which is two calendar months to each parent, may be used by each parent until the day when the child reaches the age of 8 years (**benefit amount – 43.75%** of the previous earnings, calculated based on the average salary);

2) 13 months, of which 9 months from the date of the birth of the child may be used until the day when a child turns one year old, but the non-transferable part, which is two calendar months to each parent, may be used by each parent until the age of 8 years of the child (**benefit amount – 60%** of previous the earnings, calculated based on the average salary).

The period of the payment of the maternity benefit, if the maternity benefit has been granted to one of the parents due to the birth of the child, is included in the total parental benefit period.

There are also cases where only one parent will be able to use the whole period of Parental benefit, including the two non-transferable months of the other parent: (1) if the child's paternity has not been determined, (2) the other parent has died or (3) when custody rights have been revoked or discontinued for the other parent, or the Orphan's Court has ruled that the other parent does actually raise or care for the child.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In order to address the availability of care services for elderly family members, to eliminate gender stereotypes and challenge stereotypical understanding of gender roles, in March 2020, the Ministry of Welfare, in co-operation with the Latvian Employers' Confederation and the Latvian Free Trade Union launched project **“Balance for all – B4A” co-financed by the European Commission programme “Rights, Equality, Citizenship”**. In 2022 some project activities continued and the project was concluded in February 2022. The project ran from 1 March 2020 and in total 95 awareness-raising measures were implemented.

Within the context of the project on 4 February 2022 Latvian Employers' Confederation organised award ceremony “Balance award 2021” to highlight those employers who have devoted special attention to promote work-life balance of their employees. Latvian Free Trade Union on 8 February 2022 organised work-life balance forum “Striving for Balance – What's next?”. The aim of the forum was to introduce and discuss latest trends in promoting work-life balance. Support tools for parents and caregivers were also discussed, as well as recommendations for future activities in this area were put forward. Special attention was paid to the availability of care services. Additionally, Ministry of Welfare conducted a **sociological survey** carried out in 2022 on awareness, understanding and experience of work-life balance issues, which showed that work-life balance situation has slightly improved since 2020 and the overall the satisfaction of employees has also improved.

Society Integration Foundation of Latvia has launched informative campaign “It's not about gender!”. The aim of the campaign is to increase public awareness about the risks of discrimination based on gender and to promote social integration and diversity in society in general and specifically in the labour market. The campaign consists of thematic discussions for employers and employees, as well as young people about this topic; podcasts with experts on gender equality and stereotypes, as well as analytical, data-based assessment of best practices and current situation in other European countries regarding gender equality.

Society Integration Foundation of Latvia has implemented campaign “Diversity is Strength”, which brings together employers that want to promote diversity in their workplace. Since 2018 this

movement has annually awarded five employers for promoting diversity management in their organisation and in the labour market of Latvia as a whole. Furthermore, since 2018 various organisations and employers can join Latvian Diversity Charter. On 29 September 2022, the annual award ceremony for employers was organised.

Lithuania

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes
On 28 June 2022, the Parliament has adopted the amendments to the Equal Opportunities Act. These amendments prohibited discrimination on the basis of marital status. (XIV-1192 Lietuvos Respublikos lygių galimybių įstatymo Nr. IX-1826 2, 7 straipsnių ir priedo pakeitimo įst... (e-tar.lt))
1.2 Policy changes
Measure of Strengthening Family Policy, “Ensure the reduction of stereotype-based attitudes to the roles of women and men in the family and society” (A1-580 Dėl 2021–2030 metų plėtros programos valdytojos Lietuvos Respublikos socialinės apsaugos ir darbo... (e-tar.lt))
1.3 Institutional changes
No institutional changes
1.4 Research and awareness raising
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Study “Challenges of combining family, work and personal life for mothers” (November 2021)- Initiative “More Balance” (2022) (Daugiau Balanso)
1.5 Other pertinent developments
The 2023-2025 action plan for equal opportunities for women and men is currently being prepared.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes
On 15 March 2022, the Parliament has adopted the amendments to the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, introducing the so called „warrant of protection from domestic violence”. The aforementioned measure obliges perpetrators of domestic violence to move out of the residence and refrain from visiting, approaching or communicating with a victim of domestic violence and children. This law will enter into force on 1 July 2023.
2.2 Policy changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 2022 National Action Plan on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Support for the Victims (A1-264 Dėl Smurto artimoje aplinkoje prevencijos ir pagalbos teikimo nukentėjusiems asmenims 2022 metų v... (e-tar.lt));- 2022-2024 Strategic Action Plan of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania (ISAKYMAS+del+2022-2024+m +SVP+tvirtinimo+2022_03_07 Nr A1-177_priedas(1).pdf (lrv.lt))
2.3 Institutional changes
The new amended National Law on Protection against Domestic Violence perceives the establishment of a Domestic Violence Prevention Council on a national level and commissions on local levels in every municipality.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Research:

- Lithuanian Disability Forum, Victimological study on women with disability and domestic violence, [Viktimologinio-tyrimo-ataskaita-LNF.pdf](#)

2.5 Other pertinent developments

The working group is preparing a description of responsibilities for an employee of the Municipal Administration who co-ordinates the formulation and implementation of the policy of equal opportunities, equality between women and men and protection against domestic violence and assistance to persons at risk of domestic violence or persons who have experienced violence at the local level. It is planned that a pilot model of co-ordinators will be implemented in five municipalities from the beginning of 2023.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

No legislative changes.

3.2 Policy changes

No policy changes.

3.3 Institutional changes

No institutional changes.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

No legislative changes.

4.2 Policy changes

No policy changes.

4.3 Institutional changes

No institutional changes.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

No legislative changes.

5.2 Policy changes

No policy changes.

5.3 Institutional changes

In Lithuania, single migrant women and girls are housed separately from men. They are provided with hygienic items. Also, considering the cultural and religious specific needs, the interviews and checks are carried out by female officers.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

By implementing the Integration of Foreigners into Society 2018-2021 an action plan, the information for foreign countries women in a language they understand was prepared about the rights of women and children in Lithuania, about the possibilities of combining work and education with the needs of the family, about domestic violence, their rights and assistance. Also, in 2021, a Lithuanian language methodology was developed that meets the needs of different people (for example, literacy, culture, etc.).

When selecting Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund project implementers, it was assessed whether the application included at least one activity for women and whether the applicant or at least one of the partners is an organisation working with women.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

No legislative changes.

6.2 Policy changes

No policy changes.

6.3 Institutional changes

No institutional changes

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Inter-agency co-operation is needed to ensure change.

Luxembourg

1. Objectif stratégique: prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genres et le sexisme

1.1 changements législatifs

En juin 2022, la ministre de la Justice luxembourgeoise a déposé un projet de loi ayant pour objet d'introduire dans le Code Pénal une circonstance aggravante pour un fait qualifié de crime ou de délit commis au motif d'une des caractéristiques visées à l'article 454 du Code pénal, à savoir d'une distinction opérée entre les personnes physiques à cause de (entre autres) de leur sexe, de leur orientation sexuelle, de leur changement de sexe, de leur identité de genre.

La reconnaissance de ces caractéristiques, protégées comme circonstance aggravante d'un crime ou délit commis pour un motif fondé sur l'une ou l'autre d'entre elles, s'inscrit dans le cadre des recommandations émises par la Commission européenne dans la Stratégie européenne de lutte contre l'antisémitisme et de soutien à la vie juive, afin de pouvoir poursuivre, notamment, les crimes de haine antisémites. Le Conseil de l'UE s'est exprimé dans le même sens le 2 mars 2022 en adoptant les «Conclusions on Combating Racism and Antisemitism». Par ailleurs, le Luxembourg répond ainsi à la recommandation de l'ECRI (European Commission against Racism and Intolerance) de mettre son droit pénal en conformité en prévoyant expressément que la motivation raciste et homo/transphobe constitue une circonstance aggravante pour toute infraction de droit commun. Le texte s'inscrit encore dans le cadre du projet de décision du Conseil de l'Union européenne visant à inclure les discours de haine et les crimes de haine sur la liste des infractions européennes de l'article 83§1 du TFUE en vue de promouvoir les valeurs fondamentales de l'UE et de faire respecter la charte des droits fondamentaux de l'UE.

La généralité de la disposition a pour objet d'indiquer que toutes les formes et manifestations de haine et d'intolérance sont incompatibles avec les valeurs sur lesquelles l'UE est fondée, à savoir le respect de la dignité humaine, la liberté, la démocratie, l'égalité, l'État de droit et le respect des droits de l'Homme, y compris les droits des personnes appartenant à des minorités, de sorte qu'elles ont vocation à être incriminées quel que soit leur vecteur infractionnel. La circonstance, suivant laquelle le fait qualifié crime ou délit a été commis en raison d'une ou plusieurs caractéristiques visées à l'article 454 du Code pénal portant ainsi une atteinte plus grande à la cohésion sociale, est de nature à justifier une élévation de la pénalité encourue par l'introduction d'une circonstance aggravante.

1.4 recherche et sensibilisation

- Dans le cadre d'une coopération triennale (2019-2022) entre le ministère de l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et l'Université du Luxembourg, la chercheuse Miriam-Linnea Hale a finalisé son projet de thèse doctorale intitulée «*From Stereotypes to Hostile Sexism - A Psychological Analysis of Conceptions about Gender*» sous la direction de M. Prof. Dr. André Melzer. C'est une grande première qu'une telle analyse scientifique approfondie a été réalisée au Luxembourg sur le sujet de l'influence des stéréotypes sexués sur notre société. L'étude a fait l'objet d'une présentation thématique au sein de la Commission pour l'égalité du genre du Conseil de l'Europe lors de la réunion du 11 au 13 mai 2022.
- Le ministère de l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes est en outre en train de réaliser sa prochaine campagne de sensibilisation sur le sexisme en se basant sur la campagne du Conseil de l'Europe « Sexisme : Vois-le, dis-le, stoppons-le ! », le lancement étant prévu en novembre 2022.

2. Objectif stratégique: prévenir et combattre la violence contre les femmes et la violence domestique

2.4 recherche et sensibilisation

- Le Conseil National des Femmes du Luxembourg (CNFL) – organisation partenaire conventionnée avec le ministère de l’Egalité - organise annuellement en novembre ladite « Orange Week » à l’occasion de la Journée Internationale de la lutte contre la violence à l’égard des femmes et des filles. Dans le cadre de cette initiative, beaucoup de bâtiments publics et privés sont illuminés en couleur orange afin de se solidariser avec ce mouvement qui a été initialement lancé par UN Women. L’ « Orange Week » (25.11.2021-10.12.2021) a été flanquée par d’autres évènements tels que des conférences, des actions de rue ainsi que par la grande « Marche Orange » du 20 novembre 2021 à Esch/Alzette (2^e ville du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg). Le ministère de l’Egalité s’est rallié à l’Orange Week à travers certains projets finalisés en 2021 :
 - la refonte fondamentale du site www.violence.lu une plateforme d’information digitale pour victimes, auteur-e-s, et témoins de violence domestique
 - la réalisation de la « Tutenaktioun » (action sachets boulangerie) avec les boulangeries Fischer et Jos & Jean-Marie pour sensibiliser le grand public en matière de violence domestique
 - le développement de projets innovateurs, tels que le théâtre de prévention (avec l’Ecole du Théâtre), le « Violentomètre » (questionnaire « relation2test » avec la FMPO) ou encore le projet « E Schrëtt géint Gewalt » (avec Inter-Actions) pour sensibiliser et informer le grand public
 - la campagne de prévention contre les violences domestiques s’adressant aux auteur(e)s développée par le service Riicht Eraus de la Croix-Rouge luxembourgeoise
 - la coopération avec le Centre Hospitalier Emile Mayrisch en vue de l’organisation d’une journée de sensibilisation et de formation en matière de violence domestique.
- L’unité médico-légale de documentation des violences (www.umedo.lu) est un service du Laboratoire National de Santé (LNS). Elaboré conjointement avec des représentants des Parquets, de la Police, du ministère de la Justice, du ministère de la Santé, du ministère de l’Egalité entre les femmes et les hommes et l’équipe du département de médecine légale du LNS, ce service s’adresse aux victimes adultes de violences corporelles et/ou sexuelles, qui, dans un premier temps, ne souhaitent pas déposer plainte. En effet, seulement 5 à 10 % des victimes de violences décident d’entamer des démarches auprès du Parquet ou de la Police. UMEDO est composée par des médecins spécialistes en médecine légale du LNS. Dans le cadre d’une campagne d’information lancée en mai 2021 surtout au niveau des réseaux sociaux, l’UMEDO incite les victimes potentielles de se manifester pour faire documenter leurs blessures.

4. Objectif stratégique : assurer une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique

4.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Dans le contexte des prochaines élections communales en juin 2023, le ministère de l’Egalité entre les femmes et les hommes a lancé la campagne « Vivre l’égalité » pour motiver davantage de femmes de se présenter comme candidates aux élections communales. La campagne comporte trois volets, à savoir

- une campagne sur les réseaux sociaux. S’adressant en priorité aux mandataires féminines actuelles, cette campagne débute avec la réalisation de clips courts et de « visual statements »

donnant l'occasion aux élues de raconter leurs expériences individuelles vécues dans l'exercice de leur mandat de bourgmestre, d'échevine ou de conseillère communale ;

- des portes ouvertes organisées par les communes intéressées ;
- des formations spéciales tant pour les recruteuses et recruteurs dans les sections locales des partis politiques ayant des listes électorales, que pour les candidates qui se sont présentées aux élections communales.

Cette campagne durera jusqu'en mai 2023.

6. Objectif stratégique : intégrer les questions d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans toutes les politiques et mesures

6.5 Autres développements pertinents,

Le nouvel Observatoire de l'Égalité, présenté en 9 mars 2021, répond à trois fonctions principales :

- fournir des données objectives pour développer des stratégies politiques
- soutenir le travail des professionnels du terrain en leur donnant une vue d'ensemble chiffrée
- suivre et analyser les évolutions de la situation

S'inspirant du « Gender Equality Index » (GEI) de l'Institut européen pour l'égalité entre les sexes (EIGE), l'Observatoire se décline en sept domaines. Les indicateurs sont progressivement développés et finalisés jusqu'en 2023. L'Observatoire repose avant tout sur le site web (www.observatoire-egalite.lu) destiné au grand public.

La violence domestique et l'emploi ont été les premiers domaines de l'Observatoire à être implémentés en 2020. L'égalité dans la prise de décision a été analysée en 2021. Elle inclura le champ politique, l'économie, le pouvoir judiciaire, l'administration, la société civile, le sport, la culture et les médias. L'Observatoire a également approfondi les données sur l'équilibre entre la vie privée et la vie professionnelle, domaine qui est complémentaire par rapport aux données sur l'emploi et qui sera particulièrement utile pour analyser les effets de la pandémie.

Malta

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

One of the objectives of Malta's first Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy & Action Plan, which is aimed to be introduced by end 2022, is to strengthen the principle of gender equality and mainstreaming in various policy areas, including in the education system with the aim of challenging gender stereotypes. The aim is to prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism considering that gender stereotypes are a root cause of gender inequality and affect all areas of society. Gender stereotypes are often combined with other stereotypes such as those based on race or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation, hence this Strategy and Action Plan aims to adopt intersectionality throughout.

The Directive (EU) 2019/1158 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on Work-Life Balance for Parents and Carers, was transposed into Maltese law on 12 July 2022 through Legal Notice 201 of 2022, titled the Work-Life Balance for Parents and Carers Regulations.

Legal Notice 201 of 2022 lays down the new minimum requirements in relation to paternity leave, parental leave, and carers' leave, as well as flexible working arrangements for workers who are parents, or carers. The aim is to facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life for parents and carer, with the aim of achieving the goals of equality between men and women in labour market opportunities as well as equal treatment at work.

Continuously, the Department for Industrial and Employment Relations (DIER), actively seeks to eliminate discrimination and promote equality in the world of work. It promotes fair recruitment and employment, equality in career and personal development opportunities and family friendly measures available for all employees.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The Human Rights Directorate (HRD) carried out several awareness raising campaigns across social media and in collaboration with local media houses highlighting key issues.

On International Women's Day, the HRD organised a business breakfast with all relevant stakeholders with the aim of discussing gender stereotypes in different sectors. It included three panels: (1) Women's Participation in the Labour Market, (2) Women & STEM and (3) Gender-based violence and domestic violence. Keynote speeches were also delivered by HRD, Malta's Ambassador for Climate Action and the Minister responsible for Equality at the time. This was also complemented by a series of posts on social media aimed at raising awareness on gender equality and eliminating stereotypes.

Throughout the year, the HRD commemorated several international days on social media. To this end, HRD created infographics to commemorate the International Day of Families, the International Day of Girls in ICT, Menstrual Hygiene Day and the International Day of Women and Girls in Science.

Meanwhile, in January 2022, the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) published the 14th issue of the newsletter Equality Matters on 'Equality in Sport'. This newsletter delineated the benefits of sport participation, discrimination in sports based on gender, race and ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics, recommendations on how to achieve equality in sports, and the NCPE's role as the national equality body. The newsletter was posted on the NCPE's social media platforms, uploaded on the NCPE's website, and disseminated to different stakeholders.

In June 2022, the NCPE posted five animated social media posts on its Facebook and Instagram accounts to raise more awareness on discriminatory advertising.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

In February 2022, the Maltese Government presented a motion to Parliament for femicide to be recognised as an aggravating circumstance of homicide in the Maltese Criminal Code (Cap. 9 of the Laws of Malta). These amendments are pending the final reading and endorsement from Parliament.

No legislative changes regarding Trafficking in Human Beings were made during the reporting period. Article 248A *ed sequitur* of the Maltese Criminal Code (Chapter 9 of the Laws of Malta) criminalises Trafficking in Human beings. Upon conviction, any perpetrator may be liable to the punishment of imprisonment from six to twelve years.

2.2 Policy changes

The Maltese [second national strategy on gender-based violence \(GBV\) and domestic violence \(DV\)](#) is now in its final two quarters of implementation. Monitoring and evaluation of its progress are ongoing. Quarterly progress reports from stakeholders are consolidated into annual reports. A third strategy is being drafted and is to be presented to cabinet in the first quarter of 2023. The strategy builds on its precedents by adhering to provisions in the Istanbul Convention, GREVIO's recommendations to Malta and overarching EU frameworks (including the EU's GE Strategy).

The Government of Malta also remains fully committed to combating Trafficking in Human Beings. As stated in the EU Strategy on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2021 – 2025), most victims within the EU are women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation. Additionally, almost every fourth victim of trafficking in the EU is a child. The Human Rights Directorate is currently leading the government's reform on anti-human trafficking and acting as a co-ordinating body for stakeholders working in this field. As national co-ordinator, HRD is entrusted with the drafting of an Anti-Trafficking National Strategy. In this regard, several meetings were conducted with national stakeholders including service providers. During these meetings various issues were raised including, inter-alia, the importance of enhancing a human rights-based approach in all actions and measures concerning cases of THB, the principle of the best interest of the child, and the importance of accurate and complete data-gathering on the subject matter. As regards the latter, HRD has furthered its collaboration with the National Statistical Office (NSO) to develop a more efficient and accurate data-gathering mechanism.

In 2021, the Human Rights Directorate also successfully applied for EU assistance under the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) in the drafting of a national strategy to combat THB. In this regard, the Council of Europe has been engaged by the European Commission to provide its expertise and assistance in the implementation of this project, which enshrines a human-rights based approach and aims to develop a sustainable system for the early identification of and comprehensive support for victims.

Furthermore, on 17-19 January 2022, the Special Representative of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) conducted an official visit to Malta. The purpose of the visit was to study Malta's efforts in three main areas: (i) policy development and co-ordination of anti-trafficking efforts; (ii) financial investigations into trafficking in human beings; (iii) prevention of labour exploitation in supply chains. The overarching aim of this visit was to provide targeted recommendations for future action.

2.3 Institutional changes

The Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence (CGBVDV), Malta's co-ordinating body on GBV and DV, increased its human resources over the past year.

Meanwhile, on 29 July 2022, as part of the Blue Heart Campaign, the Human Rights Directorate organised a networking event whereby Policy Development and Programme Implementation Officers from all Ministries were invited to attend. During this event, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality announced the setting up of the Anti-Trafficking Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC), which will ultimately enable the administration of the Government of Malta to ensure adherence with international obligations as well as those arising from EU Directives.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Through [its MoU with the Faculty for Social Wellbeing](#) at the University of Malta, CGBVDV continued its [prevalence study](#) on children's exposure to DV, and its [pilot study](#) on introducing a safe dating programme in the national educational curricula. It also carried out quarterly themed awareness raising campaigns, including: a campaign entitled [Your Voice can Set You Free](#) (for 2021's 16 Days of Activism), a campaign and conference entitled [Engaging Men and Boys in Violence Prevention](#), and a campaign entitled [Consent Matters: Stop Sexual Violence](#). Upcoming campaigns include a campaign focused on intersectionality and migrants' experiences of GBV and a campaign entitled Domestic Violence is Everybody's Business! (for 2022's 16 Days of Activism).

The NCPE also participated in the 16 Days of Activism awareness-raising campaign by creating motion graphics to empower victims of gender-based violence to speak up, sharing real-life stories of domestic abuse survivors, and creating animated social media posts in both English and Maltese on sexual harassment in the workplace. The latter were also published on the Intranet, an internet service available to public officers. Additionally, the NCPE published an article in Maltese on a local newspaper to raise awareness on violence against women and girls.

Following the femicide of a Polish woman in Malta in January 2022, the NCPE organised and facilitated an online forum to raise awareness on violence against women and the link between these forms of violence and gender inequalities, identifying possible way forward in this regard.

In the coming days, the NCPE will distribute a poster on sexual harassment at the workplace, which is aimed at being an outreach tool which raises awareness on the topic. During the reporting period, the NCPE also published a Press Statement on the links of gender inequality in society and femicide; an article on the role of men in preventing violence against women and promoting equality; an article on the femicide bill; an article on data collection vis-à-vis femicide; and an article on elder abuse.

The Human Rights Directorate, meanwhile, collaborated with the Commission for Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence and the Migrant Women Association Malta to commemorate the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation. This was done through the creation of several social media posts shared on all platforms as well as posters which were translated and distributed in various health centres across Malta and Gozo.

The HRD also organised an online seminar on 'Sexual Violence as a War Tactic' to commemorate the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict which was open to individuals from governmental departments, academia, and civil society in Malta. The speakers included Mr John Busuttill, the Director of Global Issues at the Ministry for European and Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dr Bryony Balzia Bartolo who focused on the legal aspects of sexual violence, Ms Michelle Calleja Chehab (IOM) who spoke about IOM's experiences with sexual violence and conflict and Ms Daryna Mizina (Amnesty International Ukraine) who spoke about sexual violence in Ukraine. The

event was moderated by Dr Valentina Cassar, a senior lecturer at the University of Malta's Department of International Relations.

For the third year running, Malta took part in the Blue Heart Campaign to raise awareness about THB. During the week starting 25 July 2022, a series of awareness raising activities were organised by the Human Rights Directorate in collaboration with various government entities. These activities include outreach sessions aimed at marginalised groups such as migrants, homeless persons and persons working in the sex industry, which began on 26 July 2022 and remain ongoing. These sessions are based on the idea that spreading awareness is one of the best ways to stop this phenomenon. While every person can end up being a victim of this heinous crime, it is evident that certain situations increase the risk of persons being trafficked.

Furthermore, during two family events held in the communities of Gżira and Buġibba, representatives from the Victim Support Agency, the Malta Police Force, and the Foundation for Social Welfare Services informed the public about the various support services and protection measures available to victims of trafficking.

Other informational sessions about the signs of human trafficking were also held for frontline employees, such as the police, medical staff at various hospitals and health facilities, and social workers employed by organisations like AWAS and Corradino Correctional Facility. Awareness raising is also held through regular media slots and articles.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

CGBVDV provided general multi-agency training sessions on GBV and DV, more specific multi-agency training on child-to-parent violence and training for obstetrics and the gynaecology department on sexual assault management (details for the last two can be found in CGBVDV's latest annual report). It also submitted two project proposals to EU's CERV funding programme, which activities are in line with the EU's and Council of Europe's (GREVIO) priorities.

The Human Rights Directorate, meanwhile, organised two networking events in collaboration with the Parliamentary Secretariat for Reforms and Equality. The first Networking Session was aimed at senior officials in the Public Service, Civil Society Organisations, and members of the Diplomatic corps. The event took place on the 27 July 2022 under the theme of 'Use and Abuse of Technology', mirroring that of this year's UN Blue Heart Campaign. The aim of this initiative was to increase transnational co-operation between Malta and the international institutions and third countries in the fight against Trafficking in Human Beings. The second networking event was held on 29 July 2022, during which the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality announced the setting-up of the Anti-Trafficking Inter-Ministerial Committee.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

The rules on the burden of proof and *locus standii* have not changed and are equal to all irrespective of one's gender.

In June 2022, Parliament approved the Femicide Bill, which adds the concept of femicide to Malta's legal structure. It limits the judiciary's discretion when it comes to sentencing in relation to homicides with femicidal circumstances - when a woman is killed because she is a woman. In such cases, the defence of 'crime of passion' will no longer be deemed to be an acceptable mitigating factor.

3.2 Policy changes

The digitalisation of justice is a clearly a strategic priority for government. On the basis of the Digital Justice Strategy for the years 2022 to 2027, court data will automatically be disaggregated by sex/gender. This will in and of itself assist in the follow up to court decisions.

3.3 Institutional changes

Following an institutional reform in 2019, the Office of the State Advocate was set up and took the advisory functions that used to be performed by the Attorney General. The first appointee who took up office as State Advocate was a female, who later in 2020 became the first female appointed as Attorney General in Malta. Moreover, as at end of December 2021, the number of female magistrates amount to 18 whereas 8 females are appointed to the bench as Judges from a total of 47 members of the judiciary.

Continuation of the 24/7 service provided by Legal Aid Malta for victims of domestic violence, a service which was launched in April 2020.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

N/A

3.5 Other pertinent developments

N/A

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

Act No. XX of 2021³⁰ was a significant development in gender equality in political and public decision-making. It introduced, by virtue of Article 52A of the Maltese Constitution,³¹ a corrective mechanism whereby if the number of MPs identifying as the under-represented sex totals to less than 40% of all the elected Members of Parliament (MPs), there shall be an increase of twelve MPs of the under-represented sex. This mechanism has a sunset clause of twenty years from its coming into force, unless revoked or re-enacted (requiring a two-thirds majority).

The same Act amended the General Elections Act (Cap. 354 of the Laws of Malta),³² increasing the number of members forming the Electoral Commission from eight to ten and requiring no less than four members of every sex.

This mechanism was first put to the test during the 2022 general election, and more than doubled the percentage of female Members of Parliament; from 13% in 2020 to 28% in 2022.^{33 34}

³⁰ <https://legislation.mt/eli/act/2021/20/eng>

³¹ <https://legislation.mt/eli/const/eng>

³² <https://legislation.mt/eli/cap/354/eng>

³³ <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/edn-20210307-1>

³⁴ [https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/election-](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/election-2022/116237/first_ever_use_of_gender_mechanism_sees_12_women_elected_to_parliament#.YupFD3ZbZIV)

[2022/116237/first_ever_use_of_gender_mechanism_sees_12_women_elected_to_parliament#.YupFD3ZbZIV](https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/election-2022/116237/first_ever_use_of_gender_mechanism_sees_12_women_elected_to_parliament#.YupFD3ZbZIV)

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

The Anti-Racism Strategy 2021 -2023 was launched in October 2021. While this Strategy does not specifically focus on each gender, it nevertheless aims to improve the situation and experience of minority groups and to enhance the quality of relationships and interactions between all groups in society. In pursuing these outcomes, it takes an intersectional approach, acknowledging the diversity within minority groups.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

HRD collaborated with the Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence, as well as NGOs Migrant Women Association Malta and Aditus, in developing and implementing a campaign to raise awareness about zero tolerance for female genital mutilation. This included the creation of posters which were shared online on the International Day for Zero Tolerance for FGM and distributed across several health clinics and centres which offer services to migrants. The posters were translated into 5 different languages (French, Somali, Arabic, Tigrinya and Bangla).

As part of the Equality for all in Malta project, the Directorate worked with its project partners ENAR, ENORB and Aditus in developing and delivering training to 120 representatives of religious belief, race, and ethnic minorities on Malta's anti-discrimination laws and the functions of the Equality Body. These sessions were aimed at empowering minority communities in Malta to enjoy their full rights and remedies laid down in the law, including those recently introduced.

The Human Rights Directorate held a webinar on 'Sexual Violence as a War tactic' on Monday 20 June 2022 which was open to individuals from governmental departments, academia and civil society in Malta. Director Global Issues at the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade, Mr John Busuttill was invited as a speaker on Women, Peace and Security at this event. Other speakers included Dr Bryony Balzia Bartolo who focused on the legal aspects of sexual violence, Ms Michelle Calleja Chehab (IOM) who spoke about IOM's experiences with sexual violence and conflict and Ms Daryna Mizina (Amnesty International Ukraine) who spoke about sexual violence in Ukraine. The event was moderated by Dr Valentina Cassar who is a senior lecturer at the Department of International Relations.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

The Human Rights Directorate is implementing its agreement with the Directorate for Research, Lifelong Learning and Employability to provide foundation courses of basic Maltese and English languages from January to June 2022 to migrants residing in Malta who require literacy assistance and training. Completion of these courses will make students eligible for admission to Stage 1 of the I Belong Programme.

Both female and male migrants also participated in training provided through the EU-funded project Equality for all in Malta, which gave them the tools and the knowledge to report cases of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief and/or race and ethnic origin to the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In June 2022, the NCPE, as part of its Annual Conference, continued to develop the understanding of intersectional discrimination by highlighting how two or more characteristics can interact with each other at the same time in such a way as to produce distinct and specific forms of discrimination. Experiences of intersectional discrimination were shared by persons who have lived or witnessed such discrimination, and the importance of an intersectionality approach was highlighted to help us understand and respond effectively to the real-life experiences of people encountering discrimination to ensure that equality is truly a reality for everyone.

In fulfilment of the International Women's Day Conference 2022, the NCPE chose Women and Intersecting Identities as a topic for discussion, in view that women are particularly prone to intersectional discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion/belief, disability, age, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Discussion was held with different stakeholders to raise awareness on this topic.

6.5 Other pertinent developments

The NCPE continued working on gender mainstreaming as per Government policy, which seeks to ensure that policies and practices are gender mainstreamed. Training is given throughout the year to enhance the implementation of gender mainstreaming in both the public and private entities. Each department and entity is reminded to prepare an annual report on the measures taken and the progress achieved in the sphere of gender equality and mainstreaming. This annual report is then forwarded to the NCPE with a synopsis also to be included in the department's annual report. As of June 2022, the NCPE had received 149 reports that were included in an analytical analysis forwarded to the Permanent Secretary within the Ministry responsible for Equality.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Main challenges identified:

- Culture change and change in attitudes remains one of the challenges. Changing beliefs, attitudes and practices does not take place overnight but is a developmental process with requires time.
- The need to gain a better understanding of gender mainstreaming and its implementation in various sector
- Limited gender disaggregated data and research
- Co-ordinating and coming to an agreement with different stakeholders with regards to having a national strategy
- Inadequate human, technical and financial investments.

Lessons learned:

- Needs analysis for better provision of training adapting to different target groups
- Education and raising awareness
- Sharing of best practices with different stakeholders.

8. Additional comments

Malta is currently in the process of finalising its first Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Strategy & Action Plan covering the period from 2022-2027. This followed extensive research and consultation with all stakeholders. This document will mark an important milestone in Malta's efforts to achieve full gender equality in all spheres of life, since, for the first time, it proposes a cohesive, mainstreamed approach to the hurdles faced by individuals in Malta, particularly women, due to their gender.

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes
<p>a) Following the approval of the National Occupational Classificatory (CORM) in 2021, starting with 1 January 2022, all central and local public administration authorities, enterprises, organisations and institutions, regardless of the type of ownership and form of legal organisation that carry out activities on the territory of the Republic of Moldova will mandatory use feminine or masculine versions of occupations/positions in their employees' contracts. The new Gender inclusive Occupational Classificatory (CORM 006-2021) endorsed by the Minister of Labour and Social Protection Order and registered by the Ministry of Justice on 24 December 2021 has been enforced on 1 January 2022 and will be used in parallel with CORM 006-14 until 30 June 2022 in order to ensure smooth transition. The Classificatory developed with expert support from UN Women with Sweden funds has over 80% out of 5,600 occupations/positions with feminine equivalents attested in lexicographic sources.</p> <p>b) Regarding the criminalisation of hate speech based on gender criteria, it should be noted that, on 21 April 2022, the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted Law No. 111/2022 for the amendment of some normative acts, by which the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Code of Criminal Procedure were amended. According to the provisions of art. 346 of the Criminal Code, in the revised wording, establishes the obligation to punish actions of incitement to hatred or violence, manifested through public exhortations, dissemination of information or other forms of public information, including through mass media, in written form, drawing or image, or through a computer system, against a category of people based on prejudice, which also includes the criterion of sex. Additionally, the Criminal Code in the general part was supplemented with a new article (134/21) that defines "reasons for prejudice", and in several components of the crimes the commission of the act "for reasons of prejudice" was introduced as an aggravating factor. The contravention code was supplemented with art. 70¹ which sanctions intentional actions, public requests, dissemination of information or other forms of public information, aimed at inciting prejudice discrimination.</p> <p>c) It was developed by the Ministry of Justice jointly with the Council for the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination and Ensuring Equality and approved by the Government on 13 July 2022 the draft law for the amendment of some acts in order to review the normative framework regarding non-discrimination and ensuring equality. Through this draft law, several changes are made to the notions of discrimination contained in Law No. 121/2012 on ensuring equality, (namely on the notions of "discrimination", "direct discrimination", "indirect discrimination", harassment", "incitement to discrimination", etc.), as well as providing more powers and competences to the Council for preventing and eliminating discrimination and ensuring equality. All of these non-discrimination notions cover the public and private spheres and protect all persons.</p> <p>d) In the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova No. 152/2014 one of the fundamental principles of education is the principle of equity - based on which access to learning is achieved without discrimination. By Law No. 36/2022, changes were made to the Education Code of the Republic of Moldova and the notion of bullying was introduced - a form of aggression that manifests itself intentionally, repeatedly and through an imbalance of power in the relationships between children, pupils or students and which refers to those behaviours in the educational environment through which a child, pupil, student or group injures, harms, causes suffering, helplessness or harms human dignity.</p>

1.2 Policy changes

1. The developed Regulation to prevent and combat sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying for Electoral Management Body in Moldova is under development process within partnership Centre for Continuous Electoral Training (CCET). As a follow up to the trainings, the Central Electoral Commission (CEC) and the CCET committed to draft their first Sexual Harassment Regulations with UN Women support. A final draft shall be presented during next reporting period. 8 internal regulations of CEC are subject to Gender Audit.
2. Sexual Harassment Regulation of National Penitentiary Administration has been developed and approved with support of UN Women.
3. Ministry of Labour and Social Protection developed a draft of internal Regulation on prevention and combating the sexual harassment that is planned to be approved by the end of the year.
4. Within the General Inspectorate of Police/Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoI) the Action Plan on Gender Equality for the years 2022-2025 was approved. By MoI Order No. 460 of 1 November 2021, the Gender Co-ordinating Group within MAI was established.
5. The Ministry of Education and Research has designated gender focal points in each subdivision, through the Order No. 1440/2021 "On the nomination of gender units in the Ministry of Education and Research".

1.3 Institutional changes

a) Support to Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) in identifying barriers for women's representation and sexual harassment reporting

MIA will be able to identify the main barriers in applying the internal mechanism for acting and reporting in cases of sexual harassment and to assess the level of representation of women in MIA and subordinated institutions as result of two questionnaires developed with the support of UN Women and validated by a focus group on February 22. So far 1000 questionnaires have been completed. The results of the questioning exercise will lay grounds for further interventions to improve the existing internal mechanisms and procedures in cases of sexual harassment.

b) Within the General Inspectorate of Border Police and in its regional structures, the gender focal points have been designated to ensure gender equality, with the responsibilities to organise, co-ordinate, report and publicly disseminate the actions, aimed at ensuring non-discrimination and gender equality within the sector; examining petitions concerning human rights violations and gender-based discriminatory behaviour.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

a) In the frame of the joint regional project "EU 4 Gender Equality: Together Against Gender Stereotypes and Gender-Based Violence", funded by EU and implemented by UN Women and UNFPA in Moldova in two districts (Straseni, Falesti), following activities have been implemented:

- launched communication campaign in 2021 "It can be different. Without stereotypes" continued with dissemination of a series of materials and organisation of community events on combating gender stereotypes related to professions, household chores and those which contribute to gender-based violence, involving various actors including from local communities: representatives of local public authorities, educational institutions, CSOs, influencers, active fathers, couples, and youth, etc.
- Two short video documentaries have been produced under the programme to promote women and men in specific professions combating gender stereotypes. One of the videos presents a male flight attendant, speaking about his profession and about the importance of sharing household responsibilities in the couple. Second short video documentary

promotes women in leadership and decision-making positions and combat gender stereotypes related to women career.

- A series of debates and capacity building sessions organised for young persons from target districts, to increase their knowledge on gender equality, gender stereotypes, violence against women.
- In the context of Europe Days 2022, to express the solidarity with colleagues and people in Ukraine, affected by the war, a movie screening event has been organised in both target districts.
- Initiated the work with youth, women with disabilities, mothers with children with disabilities, couples, service providers, church leaders in combating gender stereotypes, gender-based violence and advancing gender equality principles through social theatre, capacity building sessions, etc.

b) In the frame of the joint UN Women/UNICEF project, funded by EU, 158 civil servants (133 women, 25 men, 19 youth) from central and local public authorities have enhanced knowledge on gender equality, sexual harassment, discrimination and sexism, and Gender mainstreaming as a result of attendance in 5 (five) 2-day trainings on “Gender equality in public administration. Sexual harassment at work” organised during May-June 2022 by UN Women Responsible Partner. Additional similar trainings will be delivered in September 2022. Moreover, 910 locals from Cahul and Ungheni, of which 280 girls and 162 boys, 423 women and 45 men, raised their awareness on gender-based violence, available services for survivors, were educated about the culture of gender equality and empowerment of women in local decision-making processes, gender role stereotypes and positive gender norms within 14 public discussion and debates supported by the responsible partners.

c) Capacity building activities were carried out for police officers on the topics “Gender equality in public administration and sexual harassment in the workplace”, “Discrimination and crimes motivated by prejudice/biases”, “Equality and non-discrimination”, “Prevention of gender/sex discrimination in the workplace”.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

a) Combating gender stereotypes regarding the masculinisation and feminisation of professions: As of February 2021, "Tech Women Moldova" is a public association, dedicated to attracting, supporting and promoting women in the ICT field, in order to create the right conditions for their participation in the most dynamic industry of today and tomorrow. Currently, "Tech Women Moldova" has more than 20 active members involved in programmes and events dedicated to girls and women. For the next period, the Association aims to become the largest platform for girls and women in the tech industry, with a focus on events, exchange of experience and knowledge, mentoring programmes, motivational conferences, and educational courses for more career opportunities, professional growth and affirmation in the ICT field. <https://techwomen.md/>

- Another programme to encourage girls in IT, in which Ministry of Education and Research is a partner, is GirlGo IT <https://girlsgoit.org/ro/>

b) In April 2022, the new Regulation on the evaluation and purchase of school textbooks was approved. One of the evaluation criteria included is “Non-discriminatory character” which is based on four descriptors that are evaluated. Thus, in the context of the curriculum reform, new schoolbooks planned to be procured will be evaluated under the new Regulation, including any forms of discrimination.

c) In order to combat gender stereotypes, discrimination and promote positive social norms that prevent gender-based violence, eight pilot clubs to support men in the equal sharing of household and family responsibilities were created in two districts of the country (through the

regional programme “Together against gender stereotypes and gender-based violence”, funded by the European Union and implemented by UN Women and UNFPA).

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

1. The intersectoral protocol for the co-ordinated response to violence against women in accordance with the Istanbul Convention was approved by the relevant ministries (Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice). The order of approval has been signed on 21 June 2022, within a broadcast event organised by Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, with the support of UN Women. A follow-up online communication action on the interventions and commitments of line Ministries has been conducted on social media.

2. The 2nd package of laws on the amendment of Moldovan legislation in accordance with the Istanbul Convention, developed by the Ministry of Justice in partnership with civil society, was approved by the Government and was sent to the Parliament for endorsement. The draft law amends key provisions relating to domestic violence in the Criminal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Civil Procedure Code, Misdemeanour Code, etc. Through the provisions of this draft law, it was proposed to redefine the notion of rape, to guarantee a mechanism for ensuring the procedural rights of victims of crimes related to sexual freedom and integrity, as well as to develop a functional mechanism regarding the application of protective measures in the case of domestic violence and requesting the protective order. Additionally, it was proposed to increase the criminal liability for acts of domestic violence knowingly committed against a minor or against a pregnant woman or taking advantage of the victim's powerlessness, which is due to old age, illness, disability or another factor. In order to ensure effective legal protection, the draft law also provides for the fulfilment of the victim's rights with the right to give explanations in friendly conditions, in the absence of the suspected person; to be assisted, under the law, by a lawyer who provides legal assistance guaranteed by the state; to have ensured his right to privacy, to the protection of his personal image, to medical, medico-legal, post-traumatic psychological assistance and counselling services, with a view to physical and psychosocial recovery. Finally, the project contains proposals for modifying the procedural rules in order to limit contact between the alleged aggressor and the victim of violence. This amendment aims to reduce the re-victimisation of the victim in the event of his confrontation with the person suspected or accused of committing the crime.

3. On 26 May 2022, the Parliament approved in the first reading the draft law on the amendment of some normative acts, through which changes were made to the Labour Code, the Contravention Code, the Law of the State Labour Inspectorate and the Law of Trade Unions. The Act proposes to supplement the Criminal Code with provisions regarding holding employers accountable for failure to comply with the obligation to undertake prevention, examination and intervention measures in the event of detection of acts of sexual harassment at the workplace. Likewise, employers who obstruct the process of reporting cases of sexual harassment at work may be penalised. Another provision of the project refers to the competence of the State Labour Inspectorate and the Confederation of Trade Unions in the field of prevention, examination and solving the cases of sexual harassment at workplaces. Thus, the State Labour Inspectorate will verify the existence of the internal regulations, of measures to prevent and combat the phenomenon of discrimination, sexual harassment, victimisation at work, as well as their compliance.

4. On 7 September 2022, the Government approved the amendments to the Regulation for the organisation and operation of the Assistance and Counselling Centre for Family Aggressors and the minimum quality standards. The proposed changes will streamline the activity of providers of specialised services addressed to family aggressors, by establishing a co-operation mechanism between the institutions involved in combating this phenomenon, such as police subdivisions, probation bodies and social assistance structures. The new provisions will contribute to the improving the process of the monitoring of domestic abusers to prevent them from reoffending and

to motivate them to change their aggressive and violent behaviour, including by expanding counselling programmes.

2.2 Policy changes

By Government Decision No. 318 of 10 November 2021, the Action Plan for the years 2021-2022 regarding the implementation of the National Strategy to prevent and combat violence against women and family violence for the years 2018-2023 was approved.

2.3 Institutional changes

- a) In February 2022, the Ministry of Internal Affairs established the Commission for monitoring and analysing cases of family violence with death or serious bodily injury of the victims. The commission is an independent intersectoral body for monitoring and analysing cases of family violence, resulting in death or serious bodily injury of the victims. The purpose of the analysis of cases of violence by the Commission in question is to know the particularities of femicide in the Republic of Moldova, in order to improve the institutional response mechanisms to cases of gender violence and family violence in order to reduce the phenomenon. During this year, the Commission held two meetings.
- b) In the field of the penitentiary system, the Gender Co-ordination Group was established at the level of the National Penitentiary Administration. At the same time, training was provided for the gender units in the field of gender equality and women's emancipation.

a.4 Research and awareness raising

- a) Country-wide awareness raising campaign in the context of “Denim Day” on prevention of sexual violence targeted at women, including refugee was launched in partnership with the NGO “La Strada”, governmental institutions, by UN Women. Also, a total of 1000 informational posters in Russian, 200 in Romanian, 20,000 brochures in Russian and 5,000 in Romanian, on essential support, and on combating sexual violence, including among women refugees were printed by La Strada. These were distributed via information panel, panels in accredited temporary placement centres for refugees, border crossing points, social assistance departments, and other public locations in the districts with large numbers of Ukrainian refugees.
- b) The UN campaign of the “16 days of activism against gender-based violence” was launched in partnership with civil society and development partners in order to raise the awareness of the general public about the phenomenon of violence against women and violence in the family. Thus, within the “16 days of activism against gender-based violence” Campaign (November 25 - December 10), various events were held both at the central and local level: round tables, TV shows, social theatre, video spots, open lessons in educational institutions, as well as the distribution of informative materials, etc. The launch of the 2021 Campaign took place through an “Open Dialogue with women who survive violence” organised under the auspices of the Parliament. The dialogue also brought together representatives of the Government, diplomatic missions, civil society, development partners, as well as victims of violence, who conveyed a common message of preventing and combating gender-based violence.
- c) A joint UNW-UNDP project “Addressing stigma and discrimination of women and girls with disabilities in Moldova” is under implementation aiming. Considering the growing intersectional inequalities and barriers women and girls with disabilities face, the project aims at supporting rights holders and duty bearers to identify the drivers of inequality and impact of stigma and discrimination against women and girls with disabilities. This is ensured by contextualizing and piloting in Moldova of a global diagnostic tool to inform evidence-based decision making, as well as designing and piloting of behavioural insights-informed interventions seeking to changing behaviours rooted in stigma and discrimination against women and girls with disabilities.

- d) The Ministry of Internal Affairs/General Inspectorate of Police, with the support of the US Embassy and the International Centre “La Strada”, published brochures to inform the population about the rights of victims of domestic violence and sexual violence: the brochure “Don't tolerate violence, know your rights” and the brochure “Communicating with victims of sexual violence”.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

Two standard operating procedures (1) operationalised model for the specialist service (2) draft Regulation of crisis centre for victims of sexual violence) were developed by international expert with UN Women support under EVA project in setting up the specialised service for sexual violence victims from the Cahul and Ungheni in accordance with the Istanbul Convention. Draft documents are subject of consultation with National authorities before endorsement by the Government.

The e-Learning Course for Social workers on response to VAW cases has been developed by the National Centre for Training, Assistance, Counselling and Education in Moldova with UN Women expert support, in collaboration with Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, to be hosted by the NASA platform <http://elearning.anas.md>.

The Ministry of Education and Culture has available an **updated curriculum** in Romanian and Russian for the discipline "Harmonious relations in the family" based on the feedback received from 10 teachers, involved in the piloting process conducted by UN Women partner "La Strada", under "Young generation advancing favourable social norms that prevent VAWG" project.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.3 Institutional changes

1. Women MPs Caucus of Legislature XI was re-established on June 17th with support of UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA. Over 130 participants gathered the event opened by President and Prime-Minister, President of the Parliament, Women MPs from Moldovan and European Parliament, Romanian Senate, development agencies, civil society. The platform will unite efforts to advance equal rights and representation in decision making, combating violence against women, economic empowerment and family-friendly policies through legislative initiatives.

Women MPs adopted the gender sensitive CAUCUS Resolution pledging for women's rights and equal representation in decision-making including senior positions and gender mainstreaming through legislative initiatives by strengthening the collaboration between Central and Public Administration, Parliament, civil society to build an inclusive and equitable country.

2. During 2021, two international peacekeeping missions were carried out, attended by 14 employees (11 men, 3 women) of the Police.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

26 women leaders at local level aspiring to enter politics have strengthened their capacities about women's participation in local public administration as well as increased their motivation to run for office as a result of three (3 out of 4) on-line mentoring sessions delivered by experienced women mayors engaged by CALM under UN Women partnership (February 4th [<https://bit.ly/3P5NSLp>], 23th [<https://bit.ly/3c1qrE7>] and June 16th [<https://bit.ly/3yF7sXF>]). The seminars of the mentorship and support programme discussed about women's leadership, Women's political participation, personal experience running for mayor'.

27 participants (14 men and 13 women) members of newly appointed Central Electoral Commission (CEC) of Moldova, led by woman President, and the staff of the Commission's Apparatus (middle management) improved their understanding and knowledge on gender inclusive electoral management and acknowledged the CEC role in promoting gender equality in elections. Through a partnership with the Centre for Continuous Electoral Training and UN Women, 3 online workshops on „Gender Responsive Electoral Management” were organised with topics related to Violence Against Women in Election – prevention and sanctioning, Temporary Special Measures, Gender Responsive Budgeting in Political Financing, Combating Sexual Harassment at the workplace and in elections [<https://bit.ly/3RvHlph>].

69 participants (55 women and 14 men) representing members of political parties, young and women political wings, local public administration, public servants, and mass media increased their knowledge on necessity on integration of gender equality in election process as a result of their attendance in 4 (four) 2-day offline regional trainings so called “Integration of Gender Equality Perspective in Electoral Processes” with the purpose to build participants’ awareness about the necessity of integrating gender perspective in the activity of the political party, public institution and mass-media. 2 (two trainings were conducted in Chisinau one training in the north of the country - Balti and the fourth one - in Comrat (ATU Gagauzia).

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.3 Institutional changes

Since the onset of the refugee crisis and beginning of the war in Ukraine, on 24 February 2022, UNCHR and other UN Agencies supported the Government and the Congress of Local Authorities from Moldova (CALM) in operationalizing the Refugee Crisis Response Cell managed on the national and local levels. It is one stop shop for Government and CALM to collect the needs of local public authorities in addressing the refugee crisis, match the identified gaps with available support from donors and government, and provide referrals to refugee related services provided by Government and/or humanitarian/development agencies.

At the same time, under the auspices of UNHCR, several working groups have been set up in partnership with UN agencies, civil society, and central public authorities on all dimensions of assistance to ensure synchronous and complementary co-ordination throughout the refugee migration route. Here we also note the importance of setting up groups in the areas of preventing and combating gender-based violence, human trafficking and ensuring gender equality. All these working groups are intended to prevent situations of gender-based violence, trafficking in human beings and to ensure a gender-sensitive approach to all refugee needs and assistance.

MLSP has developed the mechanism for employing the Ukrainian citizens/refugees who have decided to stay longer in Moldova.

The communities and districts with largest refugee populations has been supported in addressing the essential needs of refugees, primarily women and children, hosted in private families and Local Public Administration (LPA) adapted spaces.

Around 600 representatives of the Government, the Parliament, the Territorial Services of the State Chancellery, mayors and other representatives of the local public administration enhanced their knowledge on how to efficient collaborate and manage better the refugee crisis as a result of series of informative activities and trainings provided by UNHCR in partnership with other UN Agencies.

Since the early days of the refugee crisis caused by the invasion of the Russian Federation into Ukraine, the Office of the Ombudsman has been monitoring the rights of displaced persons from Ukraine and how the Moldovan authorities are fulfilling their international obligations to respect

their rights. To this end, an Advisory Council for the Prevention of Violations of the Rights of Refugees in Ukraine was established and tools for monitoring the rights of refugees were developed.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

In the Gender Task Group meetings, led by UN Women and UNCHR, it was decided to carry out more studies and analysis from a gender perspective. This decision stemmed from the need to have sex-disaggregated statistical data and to know the problems faced by women in the migration and assistance process in our country.

In this context we mention:

1. Fact sheet "Refugee Profile from a Gender Perspective", developed by UN Women in close cooperation with the Border Police of the Republic of Moldova.

<https://moldova.unwomen.org/ro/digital-library/publications/2022/03/profilul-refugiatilor-din-perspectiva-de-gen-republica-moldova>

2. Since the onset of the refugee crisis and beginning of the war in Ukraine, on 24 February 2022, UN Women conducted two analyses (February-March; March-April 2022) on gender and displacement trends with IOM and local partners in Moldova to ensure that disaggregated data and evidence, as well as women's voices, are taken into account in the refugee response. The information and analysis informed the work of all actors supporting the refugee response in the country.

<https://moldova.unwomen.org/ro/digital-library/publications/2022/03/sondaj-cu-privire-la-stramutarea-persoanelor-refugiate-din-ucraina-si-cetateni-ai-statelor-terte>

<https://moldova.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/05/displacement-survey-overview-ukrainian-refugees-and-third-country-nationals>

3. A brief analysis of the gender impact of the refugee crisis in Ukraine

<https://moldova.unwomen.org/ro/digital-library/publications/2022/08/o-scurta-analiza-a-impactului-de-gen-in-criza-din-ucraina-republica-moldova>

4. A checklist for gender mainstreaming within the national response to the refugee crisis in Moldova was developed and approved.

<https://moldova.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/07/gender-mainstreaming-checklists-to-inform-refugee-response-in-moldova>

On the Group on Gender-Based Violence, led by UNFPA and UNHCR-led, established to prevent and respond to gender-based violence among the influx of UA migrants, mitigate risks and strengthen inter-agency response, facilitate multi-sectoral action in the humanitarian context, the following core activities have been co-ordinated and implemented in partnership with government institutions:

- 16 Orange Safe Spaces and mobile teams created and supported in partnership with LPAs to conduct outreach activities targeting refugees and host communities in the Northern Region.
- UNHCR Pocket Guide on how to support actors can support victims of gender-based violence. translated and disseminated in Romanian and Russian.
- Activities to strengthen the knowledge and skills of young volunteers in Moldova in working with refugees, communicating effectively in times of crisis and raising awareness on gender-based violence prevention issues. These activities were organised in partnership with the National Youth Council of Moldova.
- the UNHCR Pocket Guide on ways how supporting stakeholders can assist victims of gender-based violence was translated and disseminated in Romanian and Russian
- activities to strengthen the knowledge and skills of young volunteers in Moldova in working with refugees, effective communication in times of crisis and raising awareness on gender-based

violence prevention issues. These activities were organised in partnership with the National Youth Council of Moldova (CNTM).

- UNFPA in partnership with the Government and the CNTM has launched a programme for young Ukrainian citizens and youth "Know your host country!" to build social cohesion and solidarity among young people of different nationalities. The programme includes six tours of the country for young people and will run until August, inviting over 120 young people to visit different parts of the country and explore the language and culture.

- The Gender-Based Violence Safety Audit of the refugee entry route and assistance process was carried out to identify key risks with regard to gender-based violence, while providing recommendations for different sectors and institutions involved in the process. The safety audit identified that the risks of gender-based violence are higher in the context of private/guest accommodation, private transport arrangements and in reception and transit facilities, refugee accommodation centres.

https://moldova.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/moldova_humanitarian_snapshot_3_15_june_-_5_july_2022_1.pdf

In the framework of the partnership established with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), information materials on reducing the risk of smuggling and exploitation at the state border in the context of the Ukrainian refugee crisis have been developed by the partners and placed on the Ukrainian refugee webpage and disseminated through placement centres at border crossing points.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

Through Women' Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHR), have been intensified its support to local organisations to enhance protection of women and girls from gender based and sexual violence in conflict and their participation and leadership in refugee crisis planning and response.

Under WPHF funding, were developed and installed 125 information panels [<https://bit.ly/3uOL8tv>] in 112 accredited temporary placement centres for refugees, 8 border crossing points, 35 social assistance departments and 36 public locations in the districts with large numbers of Ukrainian refugees. The panels served as a distribution point of relevant information for women and girls refugees, affected by any form of violence. A total of 1000 posters were printed 200 in Russian [<https://bit.ly/3aDpotO>] in Romanian and 20,000 brochures [<https://bit.ly/3uM0nDD>] in Russian and 5,000 in Romanian [<https://bit.ly/3OI57XX>]. All materials were distributed via information panels.

Under WPHF funding, La Strada in partnership with UN Women and the National Coalition Life without violence were conducted trainings to strengthen local authorities capacities to better prevent and respond to VAWG within the movement of the refugee women and girls.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

1. Law No. 107/2022 amended and supplemented the Labour Code and the Salary Law No. 847/2002, with the purpose to introduce transparency measures of the salary system and bind all employers to use an equitable job evaluation system, to define the concepts of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, and to introduce an obligation for the employer to provide information periodically, but not less than once a year (at the latest in the first half of the year following the year of the report), to employees and/or their representatives on the gender pay gap by category of employee and by function (disaggregated by sex), introduction of the rule on the employee's right to request and obtain information on pay levels (disaggregated by sex), for categories of employees performing equal work or work of equal value.

2. The Parliament of the Republic of Moldova has adopted amendments to the legislative framework to ensure the reconciliation of family and professional life, proposing several measures to support employed people with children and carers:

- The possibility of sharing childcare leave - until the child is three years old, both the father and the mother will be able to share childcare leave in turn, in periods of at least 4 months;
- Shorter term, higher income under the new option to claim childcare allowance - in addition to the two existing options, parents will be able to claim the allowance under a new option, i.e., until the child is 1 year and 2 months old, at 90% of one parent's income.
- Regulation of flexible working hours in the Labour Code by introducing new options: shorter working hours, early/late start and end of working day, etc.

The normative framework for the creation of alternative childcare services for children under three years of age by employers for employees has been approved.

6.2 Policy changes

In the reporting period, the second generation of NAP on implementing UNSCR 1325 was drafted with the support of UN Women in Moldova. Considering the new regional security and refugee crisis in the country, the draft policy documents also included the UNSCR recommendations on conflict related sexual violence.

As well the National Programme on Public Order and Security for 2022-2025 was reviewed from a gender perspective and updated accordingly.

During January-February 2022, 76 representatives of rayonal authorities (50 women and 26 men) representing secretaries of Rayonal Council, the chiefs of economic subdivision, other civil servants responsible for developing strategies/programmes at the local level have better abilities and knowledge on gender mainstreaming in local planning documents due to their participation in individual Coaching sessions on drafting gender-sensitive Local Development Strategies and Budgets. The UN Women partner visited 28 localities, where offered individual recommendations for improving of the institutional mechanism to ensure gender mainstreaming based on a clear definition of responsibilities in this area and the role of Gender Unity within the public authority.

Academy applied various assessment tools in this field to determine priorities to adjust policy documents to the requirements of national legislation and the Sustainable Development Goals. It is expected that the Academy will follow-up with the rayonal authorities on their progress on approved gender sensitive documents and/or programmes from Anenii Noi, Basarabasca, Briceni, Cantemir, Calarasi, Causeni, Cimislia, Criuleni, Donduseni, Drochia, Dubasari, Edinet, Falesti, Floresti, Glodeni, Hancesti, Leova, Mun. Balti, Mun. Chisinau, Nisporeni, Ocnita, Orhei, Riscani, Singerei, Soroca, Soldanesti, Taraclia, UTA Gagauzia).

6.3 Institutional changes

In the frame of the joint UN Women and UNICEF project, funded by the EU "Strengthening gender action in Cahul and Ungheni districts" 20 partner communities out of 24 have passed/amended their Developmental Strategies and Local Action Plans through Local Councils.

Four 5-year Gender-sensitive Strategic Plans for CALM professional networks were developed for: (i) Network of Local Council Secretaries, (ii) Network of Accountants, (iii) Network of Tax Collectors, (iv) Network of Cadastral Engineers within LPA. To this end, 330 participants (284 women, 46 men) enhanced skills on developing step by step Strategies, including from gender perspective by attending 4 online workshops organised for each professional networks (12 training sessions - 3 hours) under CALM partnership with UN Women support.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In the frame of the partnership with UN Women, Academy for Public Administration and Congress for Local Public Authorities, with financial support of the Government of Sweden a series of capacity building events have been carried out, as follows:

- 200 local authorities' staff and elected officials, including women mayors (out of which 2 women with disabilities, 3 minority groups and 1 youth) have improved their knowledge and skill on gender mainstreaming in local public policies and gender responsive local governance.
- 76 representatives of district authorities (50 women and 26 men) representing secretaries of District Council, the chiefs of economic subdivision, other civil servants responsible for developing strategies/programmes at the local level have better abilities and knowledge on gender mainstreaming in local planning documents due to their participation in individual Coaching sessions on drafting gender-sensitive Local Development Strategies and Budgets.
- A comprehensive digitised 6 module course on "Gender equality in public administration" [<https://bit.ly/3Pjm7hQ>] was developed and will be accessible on Academy of Public Administration E-learning platform in Q3, 2022.
- 21 civil servants from the Gender Units from the local public authorities of level II (21 women, 2 youth) enhanced their skills and knowledge in gender equality, gender policies in the Republic of Moldova, Conceptual approaches to the gender dimension;
- 67 civil servants with management and executive position, specialists from local public authorities (62 women, 5 men, 6 youth) have enhanced their skills and knowledge in gender equality and sexual harassment, conceptual approaches to the gender dimension, discrimination and sexism, Sectoral policies in terms of gender equality, Gender mainstreaming in decision-making processes within public authorities, etc as a result of their attendance in 2 (two) 2-day trainings "Gender equality in public administration. Sexual harassment at work"
- 122 participants from 6 countries (101 women and 21 men) have shared their experiences during the International Round Table [<https://bit.ly/3O0syFC>] "Gender mainstreaming in central and local public administration: importance, current trends, achievements and perspectives". The event organised in hybrid format on 23 June by the Academy of Public Administration with UN Women support gathered representatives from central and local public administration, civil society, academia, development partners and similar institutions from 6 countries (Republic of Moldova, Georgia, Republic of Armenia, Romania, Ukraine, North Macedonia, and Azerbaijan).

In the frame of the joint UN Women and UNICEF project, funded by the EU "Strengthening gender action in Cahul and Ungheni districts" in the reporting period EVA:

- 8 local CSOs from Ungheni and Cahul enhanced their knowledge and skills to monitor the impact of public policies and public spending on women and men.
- 4 watchdog reports were developed by local CSOs with the support of the EXPERT Group.
- 4 youth initiatives were awarded and are implemented in partner communities.
- 41 local initiatives groups from 24 partner communities strengthened their abilities in project management, community mobilisation, communication, and fundraising.
- 112 CSOs, CBOs, LAGs, NGOs, Women Initiative Groups representatives, women elected in public positions, women activists, and representatives at the rayon level (in Cahul an Ungheni) have improved their knowledge on how to give feedback, how to build up a personal branding or manage own finance withing the events of Network of Active Women.
- 24 partner communities have evaluated the results of budget implementation, analysis of trends, elaboration of the preliminary forecast of resources, and budget expenditures for the first half of the year.
- 12 mayors and community leaders from 12 communities applied practical skills gained during the workshops on leading adaptive work on solving local problems by capitalizing local experiences. The topics that were brought up mostly were related to working practices

on supporting the refugees, how to mobilise the community, and engaging youth in public activities.

Monaco

1. Objectif stratégique: prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genres et le sexisme

1.1 changements législatifs

S'agissant des changements juridiques ayant pour objectif de prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genre et le sexisme, survenus entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022, on signalera :

- la loi n° 1.523 du 16 mai 2022 relative à la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes par l'abrogation des dispositions obsolètes et inégalitaires.

La loi a été publiée au journal de Monaco le 27 mai 2022 :

<https://journaldemonaco.gouv.mc/Journaux/2022/Journal-8592/Loi-n-1.523-du-16-mai-2022-relative-a-la-promotion-et-la-protection-des-droits-des-femmes-par-la-modification-et-l-abrogation-des-dispositions-obsolètes-et-inegalitaires>

En vue de procéder à la modification et l'abrogation des dispositions obsolètes ou inégalitaires à l'égard des femmes, recensées dans l'ensemble des Codes et dispositions non codifiées du droit monégasque, ce texte opère, d'une part, une actualisation de diverses références normatives, résultant des évolutions successives du droit, à l'instar de la suppression de dispositions relatives à l'ancien régime dotal et, d'autre part, une adaptation des référentiels sémantiques, conduisant notamment à neutraliser ou bilatéraliser certains énoncés sexués, fondés sur des conceptions aujourd'hui dépassées en raison des évolutions sociétales.

Les exemples de modification : suppression de la référence obsolète au statut juridique de la femme mariée dans les textes sur le droit syndical (Ordonnance-loi n° 399 du 6 octobre 1944 autorisation la création de syndicats professionnels et loi n° 403 du 28 janvier 1944 autorisant la création de syndicats patronaux) ; suppression d'une règle spécifique aux femmes concernant le travail les jours fériés légaux (loi n° 800 du 18 février 1966 régissant la rémunération et les conditions de travail relatives aux jours fériés légaux) ; suppression des termes suggérant que l'exercice de certains métiers comme huissier ou notaire ne pouvait être réservé qu'à un homme ont été abrogés ; suppression du délai de viduité qui imposait aux femmes d'attendre 310 jours pour se remarier soit à la suite d'un veuvage soit d'une dissolution du mariage ; suppression des expressions de « bon père de famille » pour des termes plus neutres et non genrés. Cette modernisation des textes juridiques contribue ainsi à mettre la Principauté en adéquation avec l'évolution de la société.

- La loi n° 1.513 du 3 décembre 2021 relative à la lutte contre le harcèlement et la violence en milieu scolaire (ancien projet de loi n° 1.036) qui a doté le droit monégasque de dispositifs adaptés destinés à identifier, prévenir, signaler, traiter et réprimer les situations de harcèlement et de violence en milieu scolaire. Elle affirme le droit pour chaque élève, sans différenciation de sexe, d'apprendre et grandir dans un cadre scolaire protecteur et sécurisé.

Les dispositions de ce texte de référence permettent à chaque établissement d'enseignement de la Principauté de se doter d'outils et de méthodes, de prévention et d'action, pour endiguer le harcèlement en milieu scolaire dans ses acceptions larges (établissement scolaire et abords, réseaux sociaux). Un plan de prévention décliné en action de sensibilisation auprès des élèves et de formation auprès des personnels des établissements scolaires a été mis en œuvre, dans une approche qui intègre toutes les formes de violence et de discrimination au cœur de ses actions. Par cette initiative, saluée par la Commission Européenne contre le racisme et l'Intolérance (ECRI), mise

en place par le Conseil de l'Europe, la Principauté affirme la place majeure de l'École dans la lutte contre les stéréotypes et le sexisme.

Par ailleurs, il est à noter que les Règlements Intérieurs des établissements scolaires de la Principauté comportent désormais une mesure aggravante au prononcé des punitions et sanctions disciplinaires si les manquements commis envers une personne ou un autre de personne ont été commis en raison du sexe, du handicap, de l'origine, de l'orientation sexuelle, de l'appartenance ou de la non-appartenance, réelle ou supposée, à une ethnie, une nation ou une race déterminée ou encore à l'adhésion ou la non adhésion, vraie ou supposée, à une religion.

- **La jurisprudence du Tribunal du travail en matière de harcèlement au travail** qui fait apparaître une fermeté particulière à l'égard des actes de harcèlement à caractère sexiste, y compris pour des faits antérieurs à l'adoption de la loi n° 1.457 du 12 décembre 2017 relative au harcèlement et à la violence au travail, le Tribunal se fondant alors sur l'obligation générale, pour l'employeur, d'assurer la santé et la sécurité de ses salariés (v. par exemple, T.T., 9 nov. 2021).

Enfin, pour les fonctionnaires l'allongement du congé paternité de 12 à 21 jours sera effectif à partir du 1^{er} janvier 2023 suite au vote de la loi modifiant la loi n° 975 portant statut des fonctionnaires de l'Etat. Cette mesure permet de tendre vers un partage plus égal des responsabilités au sein du couple. C'est aussi un moyen de continuer à lutter contre les stéréotypes qui font reposer la charge des enfants sur la mère en facilitant l'implication du père dans la sphère familiale, et ce, dès la naissance.

1.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Au titre des changements dans les politiques publiques en matière de lutte contre le sexisme et les stéréotypes de genre, entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022, on relèvera :

- **l'aboutissement de la recherche sur les éventuelles inégalités de salaires entre hommes et femmes**, menée dans le cadre d'un groupe de travail du Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes, auquel participait la Direction du Travail sous l'autorité du Département des Affaires Sociales et de la Santé. Cette recherche a été finalisée et a fait l'objet d'une publication, ainsi que cela sera exposé au titre des actions de recherche et de sensibilisation.

Dans le même ordre d'idées, le Département des Affaires Sociales et de la Santé devrait réunir prochainement les représentants des employeurs de la Principauté pour faire un **bilan d'étape sur l'influence de la Charte pour l'égalité des femmes et des hommes au travail**, signée le 7 novembre 2019.

1.3 changements institutionnels

La thématique de l'éducation à l'égalité et de la lutte contre le sexisme s'inscrit dans le cadre des travaux du groupe « Prévention et éducation » instauré au sein du Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes.

Dans ce cadre, la Direction de l'Éducation Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports a poursuivi son action en faveur de l'égalité Femme / Homme – Homme / Femme, en prenant une part active au sein du Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes avec la désignation d'un référent « Egalité ». La lutte contre les stéréotypes et la garantie de l'égalité de chacun, indépendamment de son sexe, de son origine, de ses spécificités, font depuis toujours l'objet d'actions éducatives et pédagogiques déclinées dans le respect des engagements internationaux de la Principauté pour l'élimination de toutes formes de discrimination (Stratégie 2018-2023 du Conseil de l'Europe et Convention de l'Organisation des Nations Unies sur cette thématique, notamment).

Au titre de membre de ce Comité, cette Direction a été à l'initiative d'actions concrètes à l'attention des élèves de la Principauté mais également à l'égard des personnels enseignants, de direction, d'éducation, d'orientation, administratifs, techniques, sociaux et de santé, qui doivent continuer à être les relais d'une politique active dans la lutte contre tout type de discrimination, de sexisme ou de violence.

1.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Au titre des actions de recherche et de sensibilisation à la lutte contre le sexisme et les stéréotypes de genre, entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022, on notera :

- **la parution, en juillet 2022, de l'enquête réalisée par l'Institut Monégasque de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (IMSEE) sur l'égalité des salaires entre hommes et femmes à Monaco**, dans le secteur privé comme dans le secteur public.

Cette étude révèle que la situation est, en ce qui concerne le secteur public, équilibrée. Les emplois de cadres supérieurs se féminisent depuis plusieurs années et les femmes occupent désormais 47% de ces postes stratégiques. L'écart du point d'indice de rémunération moyen entre hommes et femmes est à la faveur des femmes, à hauteur de 0,7% en 2019. Cela s'explique par une plus grande proportion de femmes occupant des postes de cadres (Catégorie A).

Dans le secteur privé, les chiffres sont plus contrastés. En se basant sur la différence entre le salaire médian des hommes et des femmes tel que défini par l'OCDE, Monaco affiche un écart de 5,9 % en faveur des hommes. Cela signifie que la Principauté figurerait parmi les 10 pays les plus égalitaires du classement de l'OCDE.

- **La campagne de sensibilisation intitulée « Tout le monde a sa place dans la gouvernance d'entreprise » menée au mois de septembre 2022** par le Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes. Cette campagne, avec le « #egaliteJagis », encourage la participation active des femmes aux postes clés et à la prise de décision stratégique dans le milieu professionnel.

- **La Journée Internationale des Droits de l'Enfant.** Une attention particulière a été portée, entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022, sur la nécessité de permettre à chaque enfant, et plus particulièrement aux jeunes filles de pays africains, d'accéder à une éducation porteuse de valeurs, de repères, et garante de liberté et d'autonomie. Le documentaire de Pascal PLISSON, réalisateur, scénariste et documentariste français, intitulé « Gogo », réalisé avec le soutien de l'UNICEF, a rythmé la campagne 2021 des Droits de l'Enfant en prenant exemple sur le parcours de vie hors norme d'une sage-femme qui est retournée sur les bancs de l'école à plus de 80 ans pour inciter les petites et jeunes filles kenyanes à devenir actrices de leur avenir.

- **Le partenariat de la Direction de l'Education Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports avec l'association « Au cœurs des mots »** placée sous la Présidence d'honneur de S.A.S. le Prince Albert II de Monaco, avec le soutien de l'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie. Des élèves de l'enseignement secondaire de la Principauté ont ainsi été invités à concourir au niveau mondial pour l'égalité des filles et des garçons et par la promotion de la langue française, par des créations littéraires, poétiques ou théâtrales.

- **Le débat d'idées sur les questions relatives aux discriminations et maltraitements en raison du sexe.** Les élèves des classes de 3^{ème} ont participé à une expérience inédite en novembre au cours de laquelle il leur a été possible de participer à une pièce de théâtre interactive (théâtre-forum) en lien avec des associations locales engagées dans la protection des droits des femmes.

- **L'égalité dans le monde du travail.** Une campagne de promotion de l'égalité femmes-hommes a été menée en 2021 par le biais de photographies mettant à l'honneur 80 femmes et hommes de la Principauté, associés par binôme, qui exercent la même activité pour montrer que tous les métiers sont accessibles. Cette opération a été menée dans le prolongement de la charte « Monégalité » lancée par le Gouvernement Princier pour promouvoir l'égalité femmes / hommes au travail. Deux professeurs des écoles (une femme et un homme) y ont participé.

Dans le domaine de la prévention, il est à noter qu'une action politique de santé publique a été mise en œuvre par **l'Institut de Formation aux Soins Infirmiers** en faveur des élèves de 4^{ème} de l'enseignement public et privé de la Principauté sur les thématiques du respect de soi et de l'autre, des relations amoureuses et des infections sexuellement transmissibles (IST).

1.5 autres développements pertinents

Le Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes a diffusé des vidéos sur les réseaux sociaux où femmes et hommes de Monaco ont été interviewés à l'occasion de Journées Internationales en lien avec la thématique « femme ». Par ailleurs, le Comité a créé une rubrique dédiée à la « *Santé des femmes* » sur son site internet permettant d'aborder des problématiques touchant les femmes : ostéoporose, précarité menstruelle, cancer du sein.

2. Objectif stratégique: prévenir et combattre la violence contre les femmes et la violence domestique

2.1 changements législatifs

S'agissant des lois en matière de lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes, on signalera :

- **la loi n°1.517 du 23 décembre 2021 portant réforme des dispositions relatives à l'incrimination des agressions sexuelles** qui prévoit une meilleure définition des comportements réprimés et une meilleure protection des victimes pour libérer la parole, renforce la lutte contre les agressions sexuelles en complétant et en élargissant les infractions prévues par le code pénal monégasque.

Ses apports fondamentaux :

- redéfinition de certaines incriminations spécifiques à la lutte contre les violences sexuelles mais sans en diminuer les peines encourues (instauration de l'infraction d'exhibition sexuelle, insertion dans le Code pénal de l'infraction de harcèlement moral au travail, incrimination spécifique du harcèlement sexuel, incrimination spécifique du chantage sexuel, incrimination spécifique de l'infraction d'atteinte sexuelle) ;

- renforcement des circonstances aggravantes, ce qui a conduit notamment à reconnaître le viol et l'agression sexuelle incestueuse comme circonstances aggravantes ;

- ajustement des dispositions du Code de procédure pénale, conduisant, notamment à porter le délai de prescription pour les délits d'atteinte sexuelle et d'agression sexuelle à 20 années à compter du jour de la majorité de la victime mineure ;

- positionnement de la notion d'absence de consentement au cœur de la définition des infractions de violence sexuelle, comme recommandé par les instances européennes, conduisant notamment à l'intégration d'une présomption irréfragable d'absence de consentement lorsque le viol ou l'agression sexuelle est commise sur un mineur de moins de 13 ans ou lorsque ces infractions ont un caractère incestueux sur un mineur quel que soit son âge.

- **La loi n° 1513 du 3 décembre 2021 relative à la lutte contre le harcèlement et la violence en milieu scolaire** Cette loi est venue compléter l'arsenal des mesures pénales en intégrant des infractions qui, sans être exclusivement dédiées à la lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes, tendent néanmoins à embrasser cet objectif. Tel est plus précisément le cas du délit destiné à répondre au phénomène de « vengeance pornographique » souvent perpétré à l'encontre des femmes, et consistant à mettre en ligne les photographies, ou tout contenu audiovisuel, d'une personne dans son intimité sexuelle, sans qu'elle ait consenti à cette diffusion.

2.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

S'agissant des changements dans les politiques publiques concernant la violence domestique, entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022, on évoquera :

- **l'élaboration, au cours de l'année 2022, d'un guide de l'information préoccupante et du signalement en matière de protection de l'enfance** à destination des entités publiques et associatives œuvrant auprès des mineurs. Même si ce guide ne vise pas directement la violence à l'égard des femmes, il s'applique aux violences intrafamiliales et concerne notamment les mères d'enfants en situation de danger.

2.3 changements institutionnels

Au titre des changements institutionnels en matière de lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes, entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022, on notera :

- **Le déploiement d'un plan de formation** par le groupe thématique dédié à la formation professionnelle du Comité pour la protection et la promotion des droits des femmes : environ 300 personnes des services administratifs et hospitaliers (personnels des services sociaux, de la police, des établissements scolaires) ont été formés à l'accueil des victimes de violences. Un module de formation dédié à la prise en charge des victimes de violences a été déployé en 2022 auprès des travailleurs sociaux et des policiers notamment.

- **Les actions de formation mises en place suite à l'adoption de la loi n° 1513 du 3 décembre 2021 relative à la lutte contre le harcèlement et la violence en milieu scolaire**, soit :

- des ateliers de « mieux vivre ensemble » (méthodes de communication non-violente et de gestion des conflits) sont mis en place à destination des élèves des établissements d'enseignement publics ou privés de la Principauté ;
- une formation des adultes à la médiation scolaire dispensée au personnel enseignant et non enseignant des établissements scolaires dans la perspective de l'amélioration du climat scolaire et de la prévention du harcèlement ;
- des formations en matière de harcèlement dispensées aux « référents harcèlement » des établissements scolaires préalablement à leur désignation (recueil de la parole des mineurs victimes, traitement des situations de harcèlement ou de violence en milieu scolaire et médiation. Des intervenants référents en matière de lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes, ont pu présenter des techniques et des outils destinés à mieux comprendre les différentes formes de violence, leurs cycles et leurs mécanismes.

2.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Au titre des actions de recherche et de sensibilisation en matière de violences faites aux femmes, entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022, on signalera :

- **la collecte des données depuis 2019 par l'IMSEE** permettant d'établir une étude annuelle sur les violences faites aux femmes à Monaco.

Cette étude présente les principales données disponibles sur cette thématique et dresse un état des lieux des violences selon différents indicateurs mesurables. Les informations sont récoltées et analysées par l'IMSEE auprès des différentes sources. Outre le nombre de cas, l'IMSEE s'attache également, lorsque cela est possible, à étendre cet état des lieux à des données complémentaires telles que l'analyse des types de violences commises, le ou les lieu(x) des violences, l'âge des victimes ou encore à leur lien avec l'auteur, ce qui permettra, à plus long terme d'être en mesure de disposer d'une série complète sur plusieurs années, pour analyser l'éventuelle évolution de ce phénomène, et mettre en place des actions ciblées.

- **La participation du Gouvernement Princier à la Journée internationale pour l'élimination de la violence à l'égard des femmes du 25 novembre**, en collaboration notamment avec les partenaires institutionnels et associatifs amenés à prendre en charge les femmes victimes de violences sur le territoire monégasque, dans le but de sensibiliser le grand public à cette cause.

La campagne 2022 a mis l'accent sur la place des hommes dans la lutte contre les violences mais aussi plus généralement sur les différents moyens d'agir auprès des victimes et des agresseurs. Cette campagne s'articulait autour de plusieurs temps forts :

- la réalisation de trois mini-films interactifs de fiction. L'interactivité permettait au spectateur de prendre des décisions aux moments clés et donc d'influer sur le déroulement de l'histoire. Le slogan « *Vous avez le pouvoir de changer l'histoire* » était au cœur de la campagne qui accompagnait la diffusion de ces films ;
- l'installation de stands de sensibilisation en ville, les 23 novembre et 24 novembre. Cette action visait à rencontrer le public afin de mieux faire connaître les dispositifs en vigueur et les intervenants en Principauté ;
- la distribution de rubans blancs par le Comité, symboles de la lutte contre les violences faites aux femmes.

- **La poursuite des opérations de diffusion, en 2022, d'une brochure** (en anglais et en français) élaborée l'année précédente par la Direction de l'Action et de l'Aide Sociales, intitulée « *Agir contre les violences domestiques* », destinée à informer et orienter les témoins et victimes de violences, notamment sur les aides qui pourraient leur être apportées mais également sur le parcours judiciaire qui serait le leur si ces personnes s'engageaient dans cette voie. Lesdites brochures ont été mises à disposition du public au sein du Palais de Justice.

3. Objectif stratégique : garantir aux femmes l'égalité d'accès à la justice

3.1 changements législatifs

Au titre des changements législatifs intervenus entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022 ayant eu pour effet de garantir l'accès des femmes à la justice, on mentionnera :

- **l'importante réforme de la procédure civile** (loi n° 1511 du 2 décembre 2021 portant modification de la procédure civile) qui a notamment introduit **l'assistance judiciaire partielle**. Ce dispositif assouplit les conditions d'attribution de l'aide financière apportée par l'Etat aux justiciables ayant de faibles revenus, qui pourra donc profiter aux femmes ayant de moindres moyens financiers.

4. Objectif stratégique : assurer une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique

4.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Dans le cadre de la mise en œuvre de politiques publiques visant à promouvoir l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, le Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes a lancé une initiative visant à soutenir l'ambition des femmes pour contribuer à la création d'un monde professionnel plus égalitaire. Le programme de développement professionnel féminin proposé en 2021 à des femmes du secteur public et privé en Principauté s'est poursuivi en 2022.

Ce programme invite les participantes à adopter de nouveaux comportements afin qu'elles affichent davantage leurs ambitions et qu'elles maximisent leurs talents pour en faire bénéficier leur organisation. Ce programme est appelé à se développer afin de créer un véritable réseau de femmes afin de les rendre plus visibles et, à terme, de leur permettre d'accéder aux sphères décisionnelles.

4.5 autres développements pertinents

Au sein de l'institution judiciaire monégasque, et par Ordonnance Souveraine n° 9.172 du 6 avril 2022, Mme Sylvie PETIT-LECLAIR a été nommée Secrétaire d'État à la Justice, Directeur des Services Judiciaires et Président du Conseil d'État.

Au surplus, les chefs de juridiction suivants sont des femmes : le Premier Président de la Cour de Révision et le Président du Tribunal de première instance. Enfin, le Greffier en chef, et ses deux adjoints, sont également des femmes.

5. Objectif stratégique : protéger les droits des femmes et des filles migrantes, réfugiées et demandeuses d'asile

5.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

Au niveau des changements dans les politiques publiques visant à protéger les droits des femmes migrantes, réfugiées et demandeuses d'asile, entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022, on signalera :

- **la circulaire en cours d'élaboration pour répondre aux recommandations du Groupe d'experts sur la lutte contre la traite des êtres humains du Conseil de l'Europe (GRETA).** Cette circulaire est destinée à coordonner l'action – déjà existante – des différents services intervenant ou pouvant intervenir en matière d'identification et de prise en charge des victimes de traite des êtres humains. Aussi, il convient de noter que dans le cadre d'une éventuelle prise en charge de victime de traite des êtres humains, il est prévu que la Direction de l'Action et de l'Aide Sociales attribue des aides financières, une assistance psychologique, un accès aux soins par le biais d'une couverture médicale, ainsi qu'une mise à l'abri qui leur seraient nécessaires au regard de leur situation.

- **La mise en place d'un dispositif spécifique d'accompagnement en faveur des Ukrainiens fuyant la guerre dans leur pays.** Ces ressortissants ukrainiens sont, pour la majeure partie, des femmes accompagnées de leurs enfants.

Ce dispositif permet à ces personnes dans le besoin, de bénéficier d'une autorisation provisoire de séjour, d'une allocation financière mensuelle, d'une couverture médicale gratuite, d'une aide alimentaire et produits d'hygiène, d'une mise à disposition de logements et de la scolarisation des enfants. Les Ukrainiens déplacés peuvent également bénéficier d'une prise en charge psychologique par le Centre Hospitalier Princesse Grace de Monaco (seul hôpital de Monaco) ou encore d'une cellule d'écoute, de soutien et d'orientation mise en place par la Croix Rouge Monégasque. Il leur est également proposé une aide à l'insertion professionnelle auprès du Service de l'Emploi et des cours de français. Il convient de noter que la Croix Rouge Monégasque distribue des aides d'urgence, à savoir des tickets alimentaires et des espèces, ainsi qu'un forfait alloué à l'achat de lait et de couches pour les bébés. Les personnes âgées ou handicapées peuvent bénéficier d'un plan d'aide spécifique.

Par ailleurs, dans le cas où des mineurs isolés seraient identifiés sur le territoire, un accueil en foyer de l'enfance est prévu avec distribution d'un kit de vêtements et de produits d'hygiène, ainsi qu'un suivi spécialisé dans le but d'une intégration scolaire. En effet, la Principauté garantit un accès à la scolarisation et aux loisirs, ainsi qu'une éventuelle prise en charge thérapeutique pour tout mineur non accompagné.

5.3 changements institutionnels

Au titre des changements institutionnels institués en vue de protéger les droits des femmes migrantes, réfugiées et demandeuses d'asile, entre novembre 2021 et décembre 2022, on relèvera :

- **La mise en place d'une cellule dédiée à l'accueil des déplacés ukrainiens**, composée du Département de l'Intérieur, du Département des Affaires Sociales et de la Santé, du Département des Relations Extérieures de la Coopération ainsi que la Croix Rouge monégasque. Cette cellule se réunit régulièrement pour un suivi optimal du dispositif.

5.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Au titre des actions de recherche et de sensibilisation, on évoquera, dans le cadre de l'accueil des déplacés ukrainiens :

- **l'organisation d'une large campagne de médiatisation des aides offertes aux déplacés ukrainiens** afin de garantir la bonne information de ces derniers vis-à-vis des aides qui leur sont accordées au vu de leur situation ;

- **l'élaboration d'un guide d'accueil des déplacés ukrainiens** à destination de tous les services du Gouvernement et associations pouvant être amenés à être contactés par ceux-ci, afin de les éclairer au mieux dans le cadre d'une prise en charge. Ce guide a été traduit en français, anglais et ukrainien.

6. Objectif : intégrer les questions d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans toutes les politiques et mesures

6.3 changements institutionnels

On notera la nouvelle présidence du Comité pour la promotion et la protection des droits des femmes, en la personne de Mme Isabelle Berro-Amadeï, Conseiller-Ministre des Relations Extérieures et de la Coopération.

Ce Comité, toujours composé de représentants des services exécutifs, judiciaires, des institutions et de la société civile monégasque, est piloté par Mme Céline Cottalorda, Délégué Interministérielle, qui conduit ses missions de manière transversale.

6.4 recherche et sensibilisation

Au titre de la politique menée par le Gouvernement Princier **dans le domaine de l'éducation plus particulièrement**, peuvent être notés les points suivants :

- **l'orientation scolaire et professionnelle sans stéréotype**. Le Centre de Formation Pédagogique du 2nd degré de la Direction de l'Education Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports de Monaco a accompagné les équipes éducatives dans la mise en œuvre de dispositions favorisant l'égalité de genre, dans les pratiques pédagogiques mais également dans l'accompagnement des élèves vers une orientation scolaire et professionnelle sans stéréotype. Trois **journées de formation** ont ainsi été proposées à une quarantaine d'enseignants, essentiellement des professeurs principaux. Elles ont été assurées par un référent-formateur dédié à l'égalité fille-garçon désigné au sein de cette Direction pour garantir la mise en œuvre optimale des actions menées et à venir dans le domaine de la promotion de l'égalité fille-garçon. Parallèlement, un concours scolaire de productions numériques a été initié par la Direction de l'Education Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports, au titre de la rentrée scolaire 2022, autour de la déconstruction et de la dénonciation des stéréotypes dans la construction des parcours d'orientation. **Les travaux des lauréats seront mis à l'honneur le 8 mars 2023 dans le cadre de la Journée Internationale des Droits des Femmes.**

- **L'enseignement moral et civique.** Au titre des programmes consolidés publiés au Bulletin officiel de l'éducation nationale, de la jeunesse et des sports n° 31 du 30 juillet 2020, l'enseignement moral et civique aborde la thématique de l'égalité Fille/Garçon en associant des connaissances et compétences clairement identifiées à des approches pédagogiques précises et ciblées. Ces contenus sont enseignés dans toutes les classes des cycles d'apprentissage dans le cadre du programme scolaire obligatoire : il en va ainsi de la participation des enfants à l'ensemble des activités physiques ; des enseignements sur le respect d'autrui, l'acquisition et le partage des valeurs ; la construction d'une culture civique, la culture de la sensibilité (écoute et empathie...), la culture de la règle et du droit (respect des règles communes...), la culture du jugement (réflexion critique, débat argumenté et réglé, sens de l'intérêt général...), la culture de l'engagement (développement de la conscience civique...).

The Netherlands

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

- As of 1 January 2022 a new act entered into force to increase a more balanced male/female-ratio in top positions in the private sector. Listed companies will now have to comply to a statutory diversity quota of at least one third of women and men in their supervisory boards. A new appointment that does not attribute to a more balanced male/female ratio will be null and void.
- Additionally, an obligation for large companies is introduced to set 'ambitious' targets to reach a more balanced male/female ratio in the board of directors, supervisory board and senior management. Large companies are obliged to draw up a plan for achieving these targets. On an annual basis, these companies have to report on the state of play and the progress made, on a comply and explain basis.
- The government has decided that measures in the private sector will be supplemented by measures in the public and semi-public sectors. Given the considerable diversity of the organisations herein, a one-size-fits-all regulation is not workable. On 25 February 2022, a letter was sent to Parliament outlining the measures foreseen in the (semi)public sector, falling into three categories:
 1. A target figure for the (sub)top of ministries and their administrative agencies between 45% and 55% women, to be reached within five years;
 2. A target figure of 50% women in the top of independent administrative bodies and advisory councils that are appointed by the national government;
 3. Government calls on the entire (semi)public sector to work towards 50% women in the (sub)top, setting a statutory obligation to formulate ambitious target figures for remaining (administrative) organisations within the (semi)public sector.

Moreover, focus will be put on the development of an adequate infrastructure for monitoring and on sharing of good practices among large organisations within the (semi)public sector.

To promote women's labour market participation and more balance between paid and unpaid (care) work in households, this government intensified the paid parental leave scheme. As of August 2022 parents get paid the first nine weeks of parental leave if taken up in the child's first year. The parental leave amounts to 70% of the daily wage (given out by the Employee Insurance Agency).

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The Netherlands is currently taking steps to expand criminal law protection against involuntary sex. We are also looking at ways to criminalise sexual harassment. In doing so, criminal law will be more in line with the Istanbul Convention. It is expected that the Draft Bill will be submitted to the Parliament in the second half of 2022.

In addition a bill is pending in the House of Representatives that aims to introduce a discriminatory purpose as a legal ground for aggravation of the sentence. Such discriminatory intent may include, inter alia, the intent to express hatred or inferiority of a group of people because of their gender. In that case, the statutory maximum penalty for the predicate offence, such as femicide, can be increased by one third.

2.2 Policy changes.

In response to several incidences of sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual violence, including in The Voice of Holland, a well-known television programme, the government announced a national action plan to address sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual violence. With the national action plan the governments works towards a cohesive approach around the prevention, identification and reduction of sexual transgressive behaviour and sexual violence. The overarching goal is to achieve a fundamental cultural change and a society in which everyone feels safe.

The national programme for combatting domestic violence and child abuse will end this year. The results of this program, specifically in regard to multidisciplinary co-operation between police, prosecution, board of child protection and a specialised (domestic violence) organisations, will form the basis for the new programme for child and system protection. With this programme we hope to better support families during difficult times and improve early detection, and intervention, of violence. Furthermore, the aim is to improve policies with regard to the emergency barring orders, e.g., who implements them, in order to make better strategic choices when implementing the order. This is to make sure the right help gets to women, men, children, and others in time.

2.3 Institutional changes

In addition to the national action plan the government appointed Mariëtte Hamer as independent government commissioner for addressing sexual transgressive behaviour and sexual violence for a period of three years. She provides solicited and unsolicited advice on the development and implementation of the national action plan. In addition she is responsible for driving the public debate and stimulating initiatives to achieve the required cultural change. Hereby she will call attention to the structures and patterns in society that contribute to the occurrence of sexual transgressive behaviour, such as gender inequality, prejudices and a lack of diversity and inclusiveness.

In the performance of these duties, the Commissioner works closely with the involved ministries, governmental agencies, supervisory bodies and social partners. At the same time, the Commissioner is in constant contact with relevant stakeholders in the field and can rely on a solid network among civil society organisations, victims and professionals.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

- The Alliance 'Act4Respect' (by organisations Rutgers and Atria) has launched a campaign in 2019 aimed at youth, in which they address stereotypical ideas that often play a part in the emergence and continuation of gender related violence. <https://www.generatiejaen.nl/>. In November 2020 they launched a follow-up focusing on the problem of victim blaming in cases of sexual, and other forms of, gender related violence. This campaign continued in 2021. Furthermore, material has been developed for professionals.
- The social media campaign Concerns about domestic violence and child abuse, that run from July to September 2021. This campaign brought attention to the range of (aid) agencies that are aimed at providing advice, help or a listening ear.
- The National Network Safe at Home, the Kindertelefoon and the GHNT-Programme have jointly developed the online prevention campaign based on the concept of Time-out. The campaign makes people aware of the behavioural characteristics that can lead to domestic violence and child abuse in our society. The campaign shows that a time-out can be a first step to prevent further escalation. The Time-out prevention campaign will run from 18 October to 14 November 2021.
- The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport organised a campaign in July-August 2021 to raise awareness for forced marriages, forced displacement and female genital mutilation. This included a social media campaign, radio commercials and posters at the airport.

Different researches have been done:

- Research is done about the accessibility of help- and hotlines in case of child abuse, domestic violence, violence against women, sexual abuse, harmful practices, human trafficking, exploitation and unacceptable behaviour in sports.
- Research on the criminalisation of psychological violence has been conducted in order to better address this phenomenon.
- Research has been conducted on what data from what organisation is needed to give violence against women a place in our monitoring systems.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice**3.3 Institutional changes**

The Coalition Agreement 2021-2025 states that the position of the national co-ordinator against racism and discrimination and the national co-ordinator combating antisemitism will be strengthened, as will the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, the national ombudsman and the local anti-discrimination services. Those institutions will be strengthened with more capacity and resources. They also focus on gender equality and combatting sex-based discrimination.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

In the training as a judge, attention is paid to the role of prejudice in judgements. However, no particular information is known about the extent to which judges are aware of their own gender stereotypes.

3.5 Other pertinent developments

In Amsterdam, a Women's Legal Advice Centre was founded in September 2021 by the Amsterdam Law Hub (University of Amsterdam), Bureau Clara Wichmann and the Municipality of Amsterdam. Their mission to provide free, gender- and culture-sensitive legal advice to women (in 9 different languages), has won them the Access to Justice Award. See here: [Vrouwenrechtswinkel Amsterdam](#)

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making**4.1 Legislative changes**

A new act, entering into force on 1 January 2022, introduces a statutory diversity quota of at least 33% women and 33% men on the supervisory boards of listed companies.

In addition, the government has decided that measures in the private sector will be supplemented by measures in the public and semi-public sectors. Given the considerable diversity of the organisations herein, a one-size-fits-all regulation is not workable. On 25 February 2022, a letter was sent to Parliament outlining the measures foreseen in the (semi)public sector, falling into three categories:

- A target figure for the (sub)top of ministries and their administrative agencies between 45% and 55% women, to be reached within five years;
- A target figure of 50% women in the top of independent administrative bodies and advisory councils that are appointed by the national government;
- Government calls on the entire (semi)public sector to work towards 50% women in the (sub)top, setting a statutory obligation to formulate ambitious target figures for remaining (administrative) organisations within the (semi)public sector.

Additionally, focus will be put on the development of an adequate infrastructure for monitoring and on sharing of good practices among large organisations within the (semi)public sector.

4.3 Institutional changes

In a 2019 letter to Parliament, the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations set a goal for the representation of women in public administration, announcing target figures for a male-female balance between 40% and 60% of either gender. To this end, measures have been taken on three fronts: working on inclusive selection procedures; actively inviting talented women to apply for jobs; and boosting the skills of women who hold political or public office.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

The continuation of the following activities by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations:

- Offering the course 'Selection without Prejudices' to political parties at a local level. This course has been developed by the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights.
- The orientational programme by the Dutch Society of Mayors, that scouts potential mayor's candidates and introduces them to the office of mayor.
- The organisation of an annual political women's weekend.
- The development of a toolkit on how to deal with online misogyny against women in office.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

During the reporting period, there were no legislative changes.

5.2 Policy changes

The coalition partners have agreed that, during the current term, the government will increase the budget of IND (the Immigration and Naturalisation Service) and COA (Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers), i.a. to strengthen the expertise of their employees on gender and LGBTIQ+ issues. The IND will focus on providing education and training on these subjects. In addition, there will be regular case discussions between employees to strengthen their expertise on gender and LGBTIQ+-related issues and increase their awareness.

5.3 Institutional changes

The Ministry of Justice and Security has had continuing talks with LGBTIQ+-, women- and refugee organisations and intends to continue these talks to increase gender-sensitive approaches within asylum and migration policies and practices.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

In October 2021, the WODC (Research and Documentation Centre) published research on the (social) safety of LGBTQ+- and converted asylum seekers. One of the concluding remarks of this research was that COA employees would need more education and training on these issues. Hence, the coalition partners agreed to focus on strengthening the expertise of COA and IND employees (see 5.2).

5.5 Other pertinent developments

There are no other pertinent developments.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

No major changes. The following approach remains in place:

In 2018 the quality requirement 'Impact on gender equality' became part of the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) which is to be applied to all new legislation in the Netherlands. Although it is obligatory to apply the quality requirement, it is not obligatory to mention the assessment results in the explanatory memorandum accompanying new legislation. The RIA provides policymakers and legislative drafters with the standards that good policy and regulation must meet, as set by government. File holders themselves are responsible for providing adequate answers to the RIA questions in the explanatory notes on proposed policies and regulations. The assessment on the basis of the quality requirement 'Impact on gender equality' identifies the nature and extent of the consequences of proposed policy and legislation for gender equality in the Netherlands.

North Macedonia

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

*Recommendation on preventing and combating sexism (2019)*³⁵ emphasises that sexism, and the manifestation of historically unequal power relationships between men and women, prevents the empowerment of women and girls, while the gender stereotypes and prejudices shape the principles of behaviour of boys and men, which leads to discriminatory behaviour and sexist acts. The Recommendation is related to the Istanbul Convention by recognizing that sexism is part of the continuity of violence which creates an atmosphere of intimidation, fear, exclusion, discrimination and insecurity, thus limiting the freedom and opportunities of women.

The Recommendation are translated into Macedonian and Albanian and disseminate to all other institutions on the central and local level. www.mtsp.gov.mk

In 2021, a new Law on prevention and protection against violence against women and family violence was adopted ("Official Gazette of RSM" no. 24 of 29 January 2021) which expands the system of prevention and protection against all forms of gender-based and family violence, in accordance with the standards of the Istanbul Convention and it is in line with the Antidiscrimination Law.

1.2 Policy changes

During this period, a new Law on Labour Relations, Law on Gender Equality and Law on Amendments and Supplements to the Law on Protection from Harassment in the Workplace are being prepared, which, among other things, will be harmonised with the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination.

1.3 Institutional changes

The Commission for the Prevention and Protection of Discrimination (KSZD) was established after the enactment of the ZSZD. The new composition of the Commission was elected in January 2021. Since its establishment, the CSZD has acted on a total of 167 submitted petitions. Of these, 77 petitions were submitted to the former commission in the period from 2016 up to and including 2020. The remaining 90 petitions were submitted in 2021 and have been submitted to the new commission established by the ZSZD. The data indicate that the largest number of petitioners were natural persons with a total of 101 petitions (60.48%). This is followed by submissions by 55 legal entities (32.93%), and 9 petitions were submitted by a group of citizens (5.39%). In addition, in 2021, KSZD initiated 2 procedures to determine discrimination (1.20%) after a significant vote.

Of the 167 complaints that were acted upon by KSZD in 2021, in 84 cases (50.30%) the petitioners reported potential discrimination on a specifically stated basis. In 55 cases (32.93%), the petitioners stated that they were discriminated against on two or more grounds at the same time. KSZD also registered 28 complaints (16.77%) in which the basis of discrimination was not specifically stated.

Regarding the grounds of discrimination, the petitioners in their petitions most often reported discrimination on the basis of personal characteristics or social status (44), then on the basis of national or ethnic origin (38), on the basis of gender (23), political belief (20), belonging to a marginalised group (19), education (17), race (15), sexual orientation, gender identity and social

³⁵ <http://www.mtsp.gov.mk/preporaki-na-sovet-na-evropa.nsp>

Representative from MLSP participated in the preparation of the Recommendation translated into Macedonian and Albanian language, which can be found on MLSP website; www.mtsp.gov.mk/dokumenti. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995); www.mtsp.gov.mk

origin (14), etc. In 18 petitions, the petitioners also stated another discriminatory basis that is not mentioned in Article 5 of the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

No data for research or awareness raising.

The Education Development Bureau concluded a Memorandum of Co-operation with the CSO “Coalition Margini” in order to draft a by-law for the procedure for reporting and protecting a student-victim of any of the forms of violence, abuse and neglect. In that direction, Guidelines were adopted for the procedure for reporting and protecting a student who is a victim of any form of violence, abuse and neglect. In March 2021, new Elementary Education Concept was adopted and is successively introduced as of 2021-2022 school year. The Concept relies on inclusion, gender sensitivity/equality and interculturalism as key principles. The Concept has its own particular chapter titled *Inclusion, gender sensitivity/equality and interculturalism*. National standards for achievements of pupils at the end of the elementary education were set and adopted for the first time, including transversal competencies and/or competencies related to particular subjects. The competencies for recognizing and prohibiting discrimination upon any basis constitute integral part of the Personal and social development and Society and democratic culture areas. New curricula and lecture materials for first and fourth grade in elementary school were adopted based on the concept and national standards. Throughout the entire process of preparation of the curricula, the workgroups consulted with experts from areas the new Concept is based on: gender equality and non-discrimination, inclusion and multiculturalism. The curricula are selected in a way to present positive identification models not limited by traditional gender roles to little girls and boys.

The new curricula for first and fourth grade in elementary school also include relevant competencies from the area of Society and democratic culture and National standards (e.g., understanding the differences among people upon any basis whatsoever, identifying the presence of stereotypes and prejudices in themselves and in others and contradicting any form of discrimination).

It is worth to be mentioned that MES drafted 2018-2025 Education Strategy and Action Plan for revision of textbooks which was adopted by the Government of Republic of North Macedonia.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

Equality and non-discrimination have a special place in 2020-2024 Work Programme of the Government of Republic of North Macedonia. The trust and dedication in values such as tolerance, fairness, equal opportunities, recognizing the differences in multiculturalism and inter-cultural communication is emphasised in the area Equal society for everyone. The same applies in social justice, equal opportunities for women and men, inclusion and participation of citizens in the decision-making process and achieving social cohesion.

The Government will continue to implement the Strategy for inter-ethnic integration and civic inclusion³⁶ and will introduce annual award for best idea/project for developing and promoting the concept of equal society for everyone. The Strategy will be intended for young people up to 30 years of age and will stimulate mutual work and creativity.

In 2019, the Government of Republic of North Macedonia adopted *2020-2022 Strategy for one society and interculturalism*. The Strategy recognises the subordinate position of woman in the Macedonian society and the existence of unequal distribution of power, rights and resources between men and women. One of the priorities of this Strategy is “promotion of the social cohesion and integration with gender equality, non-discrimination and equal opportunities based on all differences” aimed at promotion and inclusion of the gender perspective in the legal regulation and the raised awareness and understanding of the gender equality in the entire society.

³⁶ www.gov.mk

2018-2025 Education Strategy with the Action Plan determines the directions for education development until 2025. The vision of the Strategy is “comprehensive, inclusive and integrated education focused on the “pupil”, with contemporary programmes allowing the future generations to acquire knowledge, skills and competencies according to the needs of the democratic multicultural society, labour market and new challenges in the global scientific-technological sphere”. The gender equality is especially present in the activities for revision of textbooks and introducing gender sensitive contents therein. Furthermore, the Government of Republic of North Macedonia also adopted *2019-2023 Adult Education Strategy*.

2016-2025 National Youth Strategy is aimed at establishing special measures for eliminating gender-based violence in schools and providing health services for young girls and women free of charge.

2019-2023 Regulatory Strategy for Development of Audio and Audio-Visual Activity of the Agency for Audio and Audio-Visual Services contains a special part referring to raising the awareness for the treatment of gender issues in the media. AAAS, as a regulatory body, is not authorised to interfere in the editing policies of the media, but plays a special role in the creation of contents for raising the awareness when it comes to equality and non-discrimination, with special emphasis on the sensitivity of gender roles of the media workers.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes.

In 2021, new Law on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (“Official Gazette of RNM” no. 24 dated 29.1.2021) was adopted, which expands the system for prevention and protection against all forms of gender-based violence and domestic violence, in line with the standards of the Istanbul Convention, harmonised with LPPD.(Law on the Prevention and Protection against Discrimination)

The draft Law amending the Law on Personal Records regulating the legal recognition of gender is in parliamentary procedure for adoption thereof and will be harmonised with LPPD.

In this period, the drafting of new Labour Law, Law on Gender Equality and the Law amending the Law on Protection from Harassment in the Workplace is in progress which, inter alia, will be harmonised with the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination.

The Ministry of Justice works on the new Criminal Code and the proposed Criminal Code will be harmonised with the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in co-operation with the joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe “Promotion of Diversity and Equality in North Macedonia” as part of the programme Horizontal Facility for Western Balkans and Turkey II, works on the preparation of recommendations for harmonisation of 12 laws with the Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination. The laws encompassed with this activity are as follows: Law on Scientific and Research Activity;

Law on Elementary Education; Law on Secondary Education; Law on University Education; Law on Family; Law on Sports; Law on Social Protection; Labour Law;

Law on Protection of Children; Law on Pension and Disability Insurance; Law on Health Care; Law on Health Insurance.

2.2 Policy changes .

The government in 2018 demonstrated a strong political will to eliminate all forms of violence against women with the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) and the adoption of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Convention 2018-2023. In 2019, MTSP concluded four contracts with CSOs selected through a public call for funding and delivery of specialised services for victims of domestic violence. In 2019 a crisis centre for rape victims was opened in Skopje, and three referral centres for rape victims were established in hospitals in Tetovo, Skopje and Kumanovo. There are four state shelter centres in the country that provide accommodation for up to six months and two crisis centres managed by NGOs. These facilities do not cover the entire country and there is a need to open new shelters, especially in rural areas, in order to comply with IC standards. There are three national SOS lines for help and counselling for victims of violence, one of which is free. During the Covid-19 crisis, another help and support line was opened, and the mobile toll-free line also started working on mobile messaging applications. During the Covid-19 crisis, another help and support line was opened, and the mobile toll-free line also started working on mobile messaging applications. In 2020, the mobile application for reporting violence "Be Safe" was also promoted, available in Macedonian, Albanian and Romani languages.

2.3 Institutional changes

In accordance with Article 15 of the Law on prevention and protection against violence against women and domestic violence, in 2021, the Government of RSM established a National Co-ordinating Body for the implementation of the Convention of the Council of Europe on preventing and combating violence [1], with a mandate from five years. The National Co-ordinating Body is chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, and the administrative and professional work is carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. (www.mtsp.gov.mk)

The national co-ordinating body is composed of one representative from the General Secretariat of the Government, three management officials from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, a member and deputy member from the Ministry of Health, a member and deputy member from the Ministry of Justice, a member and deputy member from the Ministry of Education and Science, a member and deputy member from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, judges and public prosecutors, a representative of local self-government units and a representative of associations, unions and employers' associations, one representative each from the Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and the men from the Club of Deputies of the Parliament of Republic of North Macedonia. This body does not have a separate budget, but budget funds are planned by each institution separately, for the activities that are under its competence.

The national co-ordinating body performs the following tasks:

- prepares and monitors the implementation of the Strategy;
- prepares and monitors the execution of national action plans;
- co-ordinates the work of the institutions in the area of prevention and protection from gender-based violence against women and family violence;
- monitors the implementation of the Convention of the Council of Europe on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence and the national policy in the field of gender-based violence against women and domestic violence;
- promotes the principle of equality and elimination of stereotypes about gender roles;
- gives an opinion on the methodology for integrated collection of data on gender-based violence against women and family violence, from all relevant institutions and organisations, competent to implement this law;
- gives an opinion on the programmes for initial and continuous education of professionals who provide specialised services for women victims of gender-based violence and for victims of domestic violence, at the request of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

(2022) *Research report on preventing gender-based violence against women and girls with disabilities*. NGO Polio Plus supported by the OSCE office in Skopje and Ministry of labour and social policy.

The research shows the real scope of the problem. Women and girls with disabilities tend to experience discrimination from a very young age. It often begins within the family, then continues in all spheres of society in which they participate. A little less than half of women and girls with disabilities who participated in the research said they have directly experienced some form of violence. One in three has witnessed violence or abuse. Their experiences are vastly underreported, however. Civil society organisations working with women who are victims of violence record on average between one and three cases of violence against women and girls with disabilities per year, while social work centres record only one or two cases annually.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy within the Matra project “Implementation of the National Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention” funded by the Dutch Embassy in 2020 and 2021 conducted the following capacity building activities: - Developed modules for specialised services for women and children, for perpetrators and for raising awareness among professionals; - Realised 3 training for trainers for a gender-based violence programme for specialised services for 3 modules; - Realised 3 training for providers of specialised services for victims of gender-based and domestic violence, intended for the social work centres, the Institute for Social Services and representatives of civil society organisations that provide specialised services for victims of gender-based and domestic violence.

Following the Operational Plan of the Agency for Audio and Audio-visual Media Services for the realisation of the Action Plan for the Istanbul Convention for 2020, training was conducted, intended for employees in the professional services of the Agency for Audio and Audio-visual Media Services and representatives of the self-regulatory body the Council of Media Ethics of Macedonia (CMEM). 17 GREVIO/Inf(2022)5 Namely, in 2020, the employees of the Agency and representatives of CMEM participated in the online Workshop for the media regulatory body and the self-regulatory body for media ethics, for regulation, self-regulation and monitoring of the application of reporting standards in cases of gender based violence in the media within the UFREX project “Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in RS Macedonia”, jointly implemented by the European Union and the Council of Europe.

In 2021, the Sector for Programme Affairs from the Department of Human Rights and Media Literacy attended training on gender-based violence intended for media professionals organised by HOPS - Healthy Options Project Skopje, Margini and the National Network for Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, within the project “Different discourse, better reality: media in combating gender-based violence – strengthening media literacy on gender-based violence”. The project was part of the UN Women Regional Programme on the Elimination of Violence against Women, supported by the EU and the UN Women’s office in Skopje.

A Programme for the psychosocial treatment of perpetrators of domestic violence has been established in North Macedonia.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

The Law on Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence defines the competent institutions that deal with women victims of violence and domestic violence, as follows: police officers, professionals from the social work centre, and the health institution and health workers. The social work centre starts the procedure after receiving information that gender based violence against a woman or domestic violence has been committed ex officio, at the request of the victim, upon a report from a citizen, official, institution and association. In cases where the victim is a child or a person that is unable to take care of themselves or a person with limited or deprived legal capacity, protection measures are taken whether with or without the consent of a parent or guardian. Measures for victim protection undertaken by the centre are as follows: provide temporary care; ensures that the victim receives the necessary medical assistance and, if necessary, accompanies the victim to the nearest health institution; ensures that the victim exercises the right to social and health care in accordance with the law; provides appropriate psychosocial intervention and treatment; provides the victim to receive psycho-social treatment in a counselling centre by professionals in a social work centre, association, counselling centre for women victims of violence and other victims of domestic violence; provides assistance to the family for regular education of a child; provides legal aid and representation; directs the victim to the relevant state and other bodies responsible for economic empowerment of the victim and her active involvement in the labour market through a competent employment centre, and taking urgent protection measures in case of high risk, as well as when the victim uses the services of temporary residence, and no later than 12 hours from the receipt of the report, makes a decision for temporary entrustment of care and upbringing of children to the parental victim.

The application “Be Safe” made by a multi-sectoral working group has been published on the website of the Ministry of Interior. The main goal of the application is to strengthen the system for protection and support of all victims of gender-based violence, as well as to enable rapid reporting of gender-based violence and request assistance to the victim in conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic. The application contains important contacts of all-important institutions and organisations working on issues of violence against women, including domestic violence, victim rights education, and information/advice for victims on what to do in case of violence. With the financial support of the OSCE Mission, the Ministry of Interior also produced flyers for victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence that contained brief information messages for the victims, as well as telephone numbers from relevant services helping and support to victims. The flyers are distributed to the Prevention Departments and the specialised inspectors for work in the field of domestic violence.

According to the Law on Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, victims have the right to judicial protection in civil proceedings and criminal proceedings before actual and locally competent courts. Victims are entitled to special procedural safeguards in accordance with the Law on Criminal Procedure and the Law on Justice for Children. Lawsuit for determining liability for failure to act with due diligence. The victim has the right to file a lawsuit before a civil court to determine liability for the failure of the competent institutions to act with due diligence. The lawsuit may include a request to determine the responsibility of the defendant for failure to act with due diligence determined by this law; to award compensation to the victim for failure to act with due diligence by the defendant and to oblige the defendant to take action to protect the victim following the provisions and deadlines set by this law. The provisions of the Law on Civil Procedure are appropriately applied in the procedure. In all civil proceedings for the protection of women victims of gender-based violence and domestic violence, the competent court is the court with general local competence; in addition, the court in whose territory is the location of the plaintiff's residence, registered residence or the seat of the victim's accommodation centre also has local competence. The plaintiff who claims that by the provisions of this law the principle of due diligence has been violated is obliged to present the facts that make the claim probable, and

then the burden of proof passes to the defendant to prove that he acted with due diligence. In proceedings concerning the protection of victims, the court may not refer to a binding settlement of the dispute.

3.2 Policy changes

In respect of Article 30, paragraph 2, of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), upon ratification of this Convention, North Macedonia made the following reserve. The Republic of Macedonia reserves the right “to apply Article 30 paragraph 2 of the Convention in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Justice for Children only when according to a final court decision a child is considered a victim, i.e., injured party by an act that is deemed by law as a crime or misdemeanour with elements of violence.” The Minister of Justice carries out a Programme for compensation of a child victim or damaged by an action that is deemed by law as violence, and other acts of individual or group violence. From January to June 2021, 4 decisions for compensation of female child victims were adopted and paid in the total amount of 1,500,000.00 denars. The payment was made within the Programme for compensation of a child who is a victim or damaged by an action deemed by law as a criminal act of violence and other acts of individual or group violence for 2021. 24 According to the Law on Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, in Article 47, when the victim is a child or a person who is unable to take care of themselves or a person whose legal capacity is limited or has been deprived of their legal capacity, in addition to the measures for protection from this law, the Social Work Centre undertakes measures following the Law on Family which refer to the regulation of the relations between parents and children, supervision over the exercise of parental rights and guardianship and in accordance with the Law on Children's Justice. In the procedures for entrusting the child to one of the parents, the social work centre takes into account the interest of the child, taking heed not to endanger the rights and safety of the victim and/or the children. The Social Work Centre may temporarily restrict or prohibit the child's relationship and direct contact with the parent that does not live together with the child in cases where it is in the best interests of the child, as long as the risk and consequences of the violence persist. Forms of violence are contained in the Criminal Code as separate criminal offences or as acts of perpetration in separate criminal offences.

3.3 Institutional changes

North Macedonia is a society that in recent years has been mobilised and organised to respond more effectively and professionally to violence against women and domestic violence. The basic framework for dealing with violence against women and domestic violence is the Action Plan for the implementation of the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence 2018-2023” 1 and the Law on Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. 2 Also, a priority goal in the Strategic Plan of the MLSP3 within the Programme for Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination and the Programme for Social Security is the protection of victims from all forms of gender-based violence. In addition, gender-based violence is included in the Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2026 and is awaiting adoption after the Parliamentary procedure is completed. Following the ratification of the Convention for Prevention and Combating Violence against Women, including domestic violence, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy began preparing an Action Plan for implementing the Convention for Prevention and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence. This plan is used to monitor the dynamics of the alignment of the national legislation with the provisions of the Convention, but also the fulfilment of the remaining obligations in terms of prevention of gender-based violence and ensuring fast and efficient protection of the victims, and prosecution and punishment of the perpetrators. The Action Plan is a comprehensive multi-institutional policy for combating violence against women, and these policies should be seen as an element of democratic and transparent governance based on the rule of law. The Action Plan for the implementation of the Convention is a strategic document of the Government of North Macedonia, which defines the activities, key

institutions, indicators and time frame for incorporating the provisions of the Convention into national legislation for the period 2018-2023.

For efficient implementation and functioning of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy adopted bylaws as follows: - Rulebook on the manner of implementation and the manner of monitoring the pronounced temporary protective measures; - Rulebook on the manner of conducting a risk assessment of danger to the life and physical and mental integrity of the victim and her family members and the risk of recurrence of violence, proper risk management, implementation and monitoring of measures to protect women victims of gender-based violence and victims of domestic violence, taken from the social work centre and the necessary forms.

Pursuant to Article 15 of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, in 2021, the Government has established a National Co-ordination Body for Implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence¹⁹ with a five-year mandate. The National Co-ordination Body is chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy, and the administrative and professional work is performed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. The National Co-ordination Body is composed of one representative from the General Secretariat of the Government, three senior officials from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, a member and deputy member from the Ministry of Health, member and deputy member from the Ministry of Justice, member and deputy member from the Ministry of Education and Science, member and deputy member of the Ministry of Interior, judges and public prosecutors, representative of local self-government units and a representative of associations, trade unions and employers' associations, one representative each from the Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, and The Parliamentary Club of the Assembly of North Macedonia, judge, public prosecutor and representative of the local self-government units.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

No data.

3.5 Other pertinent developments

Article 4 of the Law on Prevention and Protection against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence defines the principle of due diligence. In this way, the Law is harmonised with the guiding principles of the Istanbul Convention, which is the principle of due diligence which creates a positive obligation of the state for effective protection of the right to life. The principle of "due diligence" defines the obligation of institutions to promptly, urgently and under legal authority take all measures and authorisations to ensure the protection of the victim and to ensure fair compensation to victims or return to their original position before acts of violence. (This chapter should be written according to the Criminal Code - Ministry of Justice.)

The risk assessment is performed by the police officers during the first contact with the victim, with identification of the risk, description of the risk, clear formulation of the risk, the reasons for its occurrence, as well as the possible consequences of recurrence of violence.

The temporary urgent protection measure - removal of the perpetrator from the home and a ban on approaching the home - is imposed by the court for a period of at least 10 and up to 30 days. In case the perpetrator refuses to leave the home voluntarily after receiving the decision on the pronounced temporary protection measure "removal of the perpetrator from the home and prohibition to approach the home", the police officer is obliged to remove the perpetrator from the home within two hours.

Programme for resocialisation and reintegration of the victims was develop from the Tim of experts and ongoing procedure to accept from the Ministry of Labour and social policy.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes
No changes. North Macedonia still has Electoral Law with quota of 40%

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes
<p>In the Law on Foreigners from 2019 , 26 Article 112, which refers to the family reunification of a foreigner with authorised residence in North Macedonia with another foreigner, in paragraph 1 provides that on a request of the spouse, as well as of the child who has become an adult, and both have been authorised temporary residence in North Macedonia on the grounds of family reunification in an interrupted duration of at least four years, and who have not been authorised temporary residence for the other reasons determined with this Law, shall be issued autonomous residence permit if they fulfil the general conditions for authorising residence. As an exception to paragraph 1 of this Article, in a case where the sponsor has died or the marriage has terminated, as well as for particularly difficult circumstances of the persons referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, they may be issued an autonomous residence permit if the temporary residence on grounds of family reunification has been with an uninterrupted duration of at least three years.</p> <p>At the same time, in Article 116 of the same law, which prescribes the conditions for temporary residence of a foreigner who is a member of a nuclear family of a citizen of North Macedonia, in paragraph 4 is determined that the temporary residence of the person who is a member of a nuclear family of a citizen of North Macedonia may independently be extended in case the citizen of the Republic of Macedonia passes away or the marriage is terminated after lasting for at least three years on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, as well as in cases when especially difficult circumstances require so.</p>

5.2 Policy changes
<p>The Law on International and Temporary Protection regulates when and which foreigners will be granted refugee status. A person with a refugee status shall be a foreigner who, upon the examination of their application, is granted refugee status and that is found to meet the conditions set out in the Geneva Convention, i.e., a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. Gender-related elements, which include gender identity, are considered when determining the membership or characteristics of a particular social group. A female person who has been granted a refugee status has been identified as a victim of sexual violence, while we have not identified female victims of violence who have received subsidiary protection.</p>

5.3 Institutional changes
Thera still shelters for the migrants which are looking asylum status situated in Skopje.

5.4 Research and awareness raising.
No data

5.5 Other pertinent developments

Ministry of labour and social policy Department for equal opportunities develop plan with IOM office in Skopje to provide training during the October 2022 for the social workers and other staff working in the Tabanovce and Gevgelija camp for refugees and migrant especially for the identification of victims of gender-based violence.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

New National Strategy for Gender equality 2022-2026 was developed and adopted from the Government and from the Parliament. In the new strategy for the first-time cover areas of climate change and women and sport as one of the priorities.

One of the priorities in this NS are gender mainstreaming policy in all programmes and projects in co-operation with all relevant institutions and international organisations in RNM.

6.2 Policy changes

The Gender and Climate Change TNA questionnaire was developed to examine the perceptions of the government units at national and local level in terms of climate change and its impact on men and women. Respectively, the targeted groups were municipal councillors, equal opportunities coordinators, and persons responsible for public procurement, environment and local economic development, councillors, associates and officers from the Crisis Management Centres.

The training needs assessment is the first step towards the development of a training programme tailored in accordance with the needs of the target groups. Based on the findings of the analysis, a mixed team of experts on gender issues and climate change developed a training. The findings of this quantitative research have shown that there is still a need for capacity building related to the familiarity and knowledge among the respondents regarding the linkages between gender and climate change. However, it is worth noting that there has been a significant improvement regarding the perspective of the local government units towards gender issues.

In the bargain, the training needs analysis highlighted the rising need for capacity development in the process of public procurement, more specifically sustainable public procurement, and gender responsive public procurement. In all likelihood, our current public procurement model is not delivering the best value. More than half of the respondents or 59% are not familiar with the impact of public procurement on climate change; 52% are not familiar with sustainable public procurement; 68% are not familiar with gender integration concepts in public procurement.

Lastly, it is alarming that nearly half of the respondents have not attended a training course on gender and/or environment and climate change. Therefore, further awareness raising and delivery of training is fundamental for enhanced understanding of the targeted groups regarding how gender and climate change intersect - in order to become an effective change maker for sustainable development.

Ultimately, gender inequalities hinder sustainable development programmes for the administration officials at national and local level. The Gender Equality and Climate Change training programme was updated and supplemented with green and gender public procurement. The training courses were attended by participants from all eight statistical regions in the country including Skopje. Two one-day trainings were organised with physical presence in Skopje and six training courses were organised online via ZOOM.

The training programme consisted of five different sessions as follows:

Session 1 – Climate change phenomena (What is climate change?; Adaptation and mitigation; The influence of climate change on men, women, children and vulnerable citizens);

Session 2 – Adaptation and mitigation of consequences of climate change (Measures for adaptation and mitigation, Gender roles in the processes of adaptation and mitigation; Undertaken measures; Green procurement concept).

Session 3 - Understanding of gender and sex and their interconnection to climate change phenomena (Gender identity; Gender neutrality; Gender roles and needs; The influence of gender roles and stereotypes on climate change)

Session 4 - Introducing a gender perspective in public procurement (Incorporating a gender perspective into climate change policies; How to incorporate a gender perspective into public procurement)

Session 5 – International and national strategic frame for gender and climate change (International standards and mechanisms that the country has ratified in the field of gender equality and national legal frame; International standards and mechanisms that the country has ratified in the field of environment and climate change and national legal frame; Action plan for gender and climate change; Gender integration, statistics, inter-sectorial groups, SDGs, Gender mainstreaming; Aarhus Convention).

All these activities was implemented with support od UNDP office in Skopje, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and NGO Centre for research and policy as a part of gender mainstreaming policy's.

Also, RNM have contact focal point for gender and climate change.

6.3 Institutional changes

In the new Law for Gender equality which are in the final stage one of the article regulated establishment of new institution-Secretariat for gender equality in the Government of Republic of Macedonia. One of the priorities will be Gender mainstreaming policy's.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Co-ordination and multidisciplinary approach are very important to have beater policy and implementation in the practice.

8. Additional comments, if any

Gender and climate change are very successfully imminent in RNM.

Norway

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes
<p>Sexual harassment</p> <p>The Government has suggested to ratify the ILO Convention No. 190 Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work. The Government has also suggested several changes in the Working Environment Act, to clarify the protection against sexual harassment. The suggestions contain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a statutory or regulatory fixing of the employer’s duty to establish a workplace policy on preventing and handling cases of sexual harassment,• a suggestion to clarify the role of the workplace’s safety representative to ensure that the employees’ working environment is ensured, and to make training of the representatives in handling cases of violence and harassment in the workplace mandatory. <p>The right to full time work</p> <p>The government proposed changes in the Working Environment Act to underline full time positions as the norm in working life, to make it mandatory for employers to decide on and document the need for part time work, and discuss this issue with union representatives, and to strengthen preferential right for part-time employees. Access to full time work is especially important to ensure economic independence and strengthen women’s position in the labour market.</p> <p>Fathers’ rights to parental leave</p> <p>From August 2022 fathers’ rights to parental allowance is strengthened as fathers can take out 8 weeks paid leave, even though the mother does not fulfil the requirements for activity in the National Insurance Act. This change applies to cases where only the father has earned the right to parental allowance.</p>
1.2 Policy changes
<p>Sexual harassment</p> <p>The Government has started working on a White paper on sexual harassment. The White paper will map the scope of sexual harassment and suggest measures on important arenas such as in the labour market, in education and in culture and spare time arenas. The white paper will be presented in 2024.</p> <p>Gender Equality in the labour market</p> <p>The government has appointed a health personnel commission. Among other things, the commission will identify recruitment challenges in various parts of the country, and the reasons for this. The need for a more even gender distribution among employees is part of this work. The commission will also give an account of the reasons for and use of part-time within the various professions, including the extent to which part-time is voluntary or involuntary. The commission will point out structural changes that can reduce part-time use, investigate issues relating to full-time and part-time, and propose changes that can reduce part-time use.</p> <p>The government is working on a White paper on professional education in the university and college sector, including teacher education, engineering education and health and social studies education. The rapport will have an explicit gender perspective and propose solutions for how the government can facilitate for more men to choose teacher education and health and social sciences education and more women to choose engineering education.</p>

Women's health

The government will present a strategy concerning women's health. The strategy will consider measures for better examination, treatment and follow-up of women's health in the health service.

1.3 Institutional changes

Men's gender equality challenges and including men in gender equality work

The government has appointed a commission to investigate gender equality challenges faced by boys and men which contribute to alienation and are an obstacle to a gender equal society.

The commission will assess issues concerning family, education, leisure, work, health, violence, sexual harassment, queer people's living conditions, negative social control and integration.

The committee will look at gender equality challenges in the light of norms for masculinity and traditional gender roles, where this is relevant. The committee will also consider the major changes in the male gender role that have taken place in recent years the commission will also propose solutions on how to encourage more men to choose female-dominated educations and professions.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Sexual harassment

The governments annual national conference on gender equality this year focused on what has happened after #metoo. The conference aimed at sharing experiences from different sectors, including schools, discussing what different stakeholders (including the government) have done to prevent, protect and handle cases of sexual harassment, and to discuss and share good measures and efforts. The conference lifted the issues from different perspectives, including sexual harassment targeting women with disabilities.

The Norwegian Ministry of Defence is continuing their work to prevent sexual harassment through among other things, developing a diversity plan, developing awareness-raising campaigns, and developing online training on whistle blowing.

Gender Equality in the labour market

The Ministry of Culture and Equality has funded a new project to recruit more boys to the health and care education. The project is a one-year pilot with role model measures. Boys in secondary school and upper secondary school are the target group, but staff in the school will also gain increased knowledge about the problem. The University of Tromsø is carrying out the pilot.

As Norway holds the presidency of the Nordic council of ministers this year, one of the activities is a Nordic conference taking place on 27 September, called *A gender equal Nordic region – measures and solutions for future education and working market*. It will especially focus on gender equality in the changing world of work, and on the gender segregated education and labour market.

A new study has looked at what can increase the proportion of female top managers in the private sector. The study shows that the competitive conditions for men and women are different, as women take on more care responsibilities. It reduces the probability of both having a position at a high level, with responsibility for results, and a high income. Men more often have partners who work less and who take more responsibility at home, thus they have better conditions to continue working more and to say yes to exciting job opportunities with more responsibility and pay. https://samfunnsforskning.brage.unit.no/samfunnsforskning-xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2984123/Rapport_4_22_web.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
(English summary in the report)

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The government has in 2022 increased the grants to the four Norwegian centres for equality (including one centre working on men's issues and gender equality for men). The increase is 33% compared to the previous year. The grant schemes targeting NGOs working on gender equality and projects to promote gender equality has been increased by 70% this year.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

See 1.1 about sexual harassment

The government will investigate legislative changes and assess measures to strengthen the quality of the crisis centre provision. The offer for particularly vulnerable groups, for example those exposed to violence with drug problems, mental disorders or impaired functioning, the offer for men, privacy in crisis centres, crisis centres in Sami areas and children's rights are some of the issues we will look at.

A legal committee has been appointed which will carry out a comprehensive investigation of legal issues in cases relating to negative social control, honour-related violence, forced marriage, genital mutilation and psychological violence.

2.2 Policy changes

See 1.2 about sexual harassment

The government is working on an escalation plan against violence and abuse against children and violence in close relationships.

2.3 Institutional changes

The government has decided to establish a permanent partner homicide commission, from 2023. The aim of the commission is, among other things, to uncover system failures, learn from mistakes and to further develop the work to prevent serious partner violence and partner murder,

2.4 Research and awareness raising

See 1.4 about sexual harassment

The National Expert team against forced marriage, FGM and negative social control was established in 2004. The Expert team's main purpose is to give advice and guidance to first- and second line services, NGOs and individuals in cases involving honour-based violence, forced marriage, FGM and negative social control.

The team works to increase competence and provide capacity building in front-line services.

The team co-ordinate and allocate accommodation in the National Housing Scheme for people over the age of 18 who are victims of forced marriage, honour-based violence and negative social control.

The team manages and allocates the reimbursement scheme for financial assistance for safe returning of victims abroad and works to make the necessary co-ordination with other agencies in Norway such as police, shelters, child protection services and so on.

In 2021 and in 2022 Bufdir got extra funding to spread awareness about The Expert teams' helpline, which offers guidance to adult victims and professionals in contact with victims and about the

national housing schemes. This work has been going on through 2021 and 2022. Short films have been created targeting professionals and youths in risk of being taken abroad against their will.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

Nothing to report

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

Nothing to report

3.2 Policy changes

Nothing to report

3.3 Institutional changes

Nothing to report

3.4 Research and awareness raising

Nothing to report

3.5 Other pertinent developments

Nothing to report

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

Nothing to report

4.2 Policy changes

Nothing to report

4.3 Institutional changes

Nothing to report

4.4 Research and awareness raising

Nothing to report

4.5 Other pertinent developments

Nothing to report

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Nothing to report

5.2 Policy changes

As a response to alerts that vulnerable Ukrainian refugees, many of them women with children, risked falling victim to exploitation and human trafficking, the police and relevant governmental agencies within immigration, integration, health care, childcare services and labour in Norway engaged in an early and joint effort to develop an action plan with a number of measures. These included preventive measures, and measures to identify potential victims of trafficking, exploitation,

coercion and violence, to ensure their safety and access to assistance. The various measures includes information material and campaigns directed at vulnerable migrants and asylum seekers, and capacity building measures targeting reception camp personnel and relevant services in the municipalities. A number of regular training courses, digital training sessions and webinars were organised during the spring of 2022.

Relevant governmental agencies, within health care, education, childcare services, immigration, police, and integration, have also co-operated to co-ordinate efforts concerning children, youth and families from Ukraine. As a result of this co-operation various measures were implemented, for example, the Agency for Children, Youth and Family Affairs were mandated to support the immigration authorities with providing training and guidance directly to personnel in reception camps in identifying vulnerability and supporting refugee families, children and youth.

5.3 Institutional changes

Nothing to report

5.4 Research and awareness raising

Nothing to report

5.5 Other pertinent developments

Nothing to report

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Nothing to report

6.2 Policy changes

Nothing to report

6.3 Institutional changes

Nothing to report

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Nothing to report

6.5 Other pertinent developments

Nothing to report

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

We would like to highlight the earlier strengthening of the duties to work actively to promote equality and prevent discrimination for employers and public authorities in the Equality and discrimination legislations. These changes and the follow up work to develop guidelines in dialogue with several actors across sectors, including the social partners is creating more awareness about the duties and what they imply, even though only small steps are taken at the time.

8. Additional comments, if any

We are ready to share experiences on any topic reported here.

Poland

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.2 Policy changes

National Action Programme for Equal Treatment for 2022-2030 was adopted in May 2022 to integrate the principle of equal treatment into national policies. The programme sets out the objectives and priorities of activities for equal treatment, and its aim is to eliminate discrimination from social life in Poland to the highest possible degree. Actions include in particular raising social awareness in the field of equal treatment and counteracting breaches of the principle of equal treatment. The Programme is a multi-annual programme which sets out in a strategic manner the objectives and priorities of activities in the field of equal treatment. The individual priorities of this document have been built on the basis of main areas of social and economic life, rather than on the basis of challenges concerning the grounds for discrimination. The programme includes the following priorities: Anti-discrimination policy, Labour Education, Health, Access to goods and services, Awareness raising, Data collection and research, Co-ordination. Therefore, most of the activities planned in the project target all groups vulnerable to discrimination in a given area of socio-economic life.

The Ministry of Family and Social Policy finances pilot projects, implemented by voivodeship (regional) and powiat (district) labour offices, aimed at testing new methods of co-operation with clients, ways of helping the unemployed, jobseekers or employers as part of the recruitment announced in October last year. In total, 71 pilot projects are implemented for the amount of PLN 54 728 869.68. The vast majority of pilot projects in the above-mentioned recruitment is aimed at women returning to the labour market after giving birth or excluded from the labour market due to caring for children or dependents.

As part of pilot projects, innovative solutions are tested, such as co-financing of part-time employment, voucher for childcare, bonus for finding a job on your own, monthly internships, image voucher, etc. If the new forms of support proposed and tested in pilot projects will bring as a final result, the desired effect can be implemented into the law and will affect the effective activation of previously unused human potential, and thus improve the situation of women in the labour market.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

The Ministry of Education and Science, in co-operation with the Information Processing Centre – National Research Institute, is participating in a Horizon Europe-funded project entitled MINDtheGEPs, which focuses, among other things, on developing recommendations for the introduction of Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) in science and higher education sector entities. The plans are required to successfully apply for Horizon Europe funding. The project will develop recommendations for the preparation and implementation of GEPs, and will conduct audits of developed GEPs for their compliance with gender equality legislation.

In November 2021 Poland became a signatory to the Ljubljana Declaration on Gender Equality in Research.

1.5 Other pertinent developments.

The Ministry of Education and Science has prepared a document entitled Safe School. Recommended preventive actions for the physical and digital safety of students have been made available on the website for free download. It is a compendium of knowledge for students, teachers and parents on how to recognise threatening situations, how to react to difficult situations, rules of conduct and, for the head teacher, also about current legislation.

During the period November 2021 – December 2022, The Ministry of Sport and Tourism conducted a number of education and information activities in the area of preventing and combating stereotypes and sexism, as well as incorporating equality between women and men perspective in the field of sport. The main activity in this regard is the “Women Leaders in Sport” series conducted within the Sports Management Academy. In the reporting period, a total of three training sessions were held or are planned in this cycle (16.11.2021, 25.05.2022 and 20.09.2022). Each of them is aimed at strengthening the role of women in the staff of Polish sports associations through training on how to counteract discrimination, bullying and all kinds of inequality between women and men in the Polish sports environment.

As of 2022, the Ministry of Sport and Tourism, in co-operation with the Institute of Sport – National Research Institute, has extended its educational activities on combating inequality between women and men also to ongoing projects aimed at the coaching community. As part of the Coaches Academy, an online training course entitled “Reducing human rights violations in relation to sports activities” was held on 28 April 2022. This training addressed, among other issues, the prohibition of discrimination and explained the possible occurrence of violations in this regard in the field of sports activities.

In the framework of the above Academy, a training course "Aspects of the women's training process" is also scheduled for 11 October 2022, where topics such as counteracting stereotyping in coach-athlete contacts are to be addressed.

At the same time, as part of the public contract for the realisation of an internet portal entitled Trainer's Forum, aimed at the coaching community in Poland, the portal's contractor – the Institute of Sport – was obliged to publish, by the end of 2022, articles addressing the subject of equal treatment in sport, counteracting discrimination and mobbing in the sporting environment. Articles addressing the aforementioned topics are planned for publication between October and December 2022.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.2 Policy changes

Document regulating systemic solutions in Poland aimed at counteracting violence, including violence against women, is the National Programme for Counteracting Violence in the Family for 2022.

The above-mentioned Programme has designated four priority areas for implementation:

- Prevention and social education: an area addressed to the general public, including individuals and families at risk of family violence.
- Protection and assistance to persons affected by family violence: an area directed to persons affected by family violence (including: children, women, spouses or partners in informal unions, the elderly, persons with disabilities).
- Impact on persons using violence in the family: targeting persons using violence in the family, as well as relevant services or entities dealing with impact on persons using violence.
- Increasing competence of services: this area addressed to representatives of institutions and entities carrying out tasks related to counteracting violence in the family.

Bearing in mind the need to systematise actions to respect the rights of representatives of minorities in Poland, including the prevention of hate speech and hate crimes, in 2018, in co-operation with the Chief Police Commandant's Plenipotentiary for Human Rights Protection, Police developed the Action Plan for 2018-2021 in the field of counteracting the promotion of fascism and other totalitarian regimes as well as crimes of inciting hatred based on national, ethnic, racial, religious

differences or due to lack of faith. Due to the essence of the problem of hate speech and hate crimes, the Prevention Office of the Police Headquarters decided to continue it in 2022-2025.

The Prevention Office of the Police is responsible for implementing this Plan at the central level, with the active support of the Plenipotentiary of the Police Commander in Chief for Human Rights Protection. Social prevention co-ordinators are responsible for its implementation at the regional and local level, with the support of analogous plenipotentiaries of provincial or capital police commanders. Activities under the Plan are implemented based on periodic schedules prepared by regional co-ordinators in consultation with the abovementioned plenipotentiaries. The local/Warsaw Police Headquarters were obliged to submit such programmes to the Prevention Office of the National Police Headquarters by 31 December of a given year for the following year. Co-ordinators responsible for the implementation of the Plan meet at regular meetings organised by the Prevention Office of the National Police Headquarters at least once a year to discuss possible problems, exchange practices and experiences related to counteracting the promotion of fascism and other totalitarian regimes and crimes of inciting hatred.

The objectives of the Police Action Plan for the years 2022-2025 in the field of counteracting hate speech, crimes of inciting hatred based on national, ethnic, racial, and religious differences or due to non-denominationalism, and the promotion of fascism and other totalitarian regimes are:

- Limiting the scale of hate speech (including hate on the Internet and media) leads to the escalation of hatred in the form of acts of violence and incitement to commit crimes.
- Systematic implementation of activities aimed at preventing or reducing hate crime (based on a current diagnosis of the type and scale of threats in local communities).
- Limiting negative and hostile attitudes, degrading, discriminatory and humiliating treatment, and ingrained stereotypes in various social groups.
- Co-creating a social atmosphere that strongly condemns the existence of all totalitarian systems and counteracts the radicalisation of attitudes and worldviews, resulting in acts of aggression and causing fear or anxiety of social minorities in Poland.
- Reduction in the public space of the occurrence of all forms of promoting totalitarian regimes and violating human dignity due to national, ethnic, racial, religious, or non-denominational differences or other reasons resulting from inalienable (permanent) features.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

In October 2021, the Prevention Office of the Police Headquarters implemented the project entitled identification of victims of trafficking in human beings as the basis for obtaining support from the aggrieved party. It is an initiative implemented under the Internal Security Fund: an instrument of police co-operation, preventing and combating crime and crisis management. Completion of the project is scheduled for the end of December this year. The project's budget is slightly over PLN 1.5 million. The project's main goal is to increase the effectiveness of the Police in identifying victims of trafficking human beings. The specific objectives are:

- increasing the competencies of co-ordinators in the field of early identification of victims and conducting meetings with the public,
- creating an impulse to raise awareness of the dangers of modern slavery among people leaving or intending to go to work outside the country.

Project target group are 740 officers of the criminal service and the prevention service, dealing with the co-ordination of the prevention and combating of the crime of trafficking in human beings at the regional level and people aged 16-45 who leave or intend to go to work outside the country, primarily students of the final grades of vocational/technical/secondary schools, students, people in a difficult economic situation, and unemployed.

Main design activities are:

- Articles on the website and development of educational materials such as a manual on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings in electronic version, prepared by police officers and representatives of the Human Trafficking Research Centre of the University of Warsaw, dedicated to criminal service and preventive service officers and information and education brochure on the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings and the rights of victims of this crime, prepared for distribution by Police organisational units during meetings with the public and preventive activities.
- Specialist training/workshops for 740 officers of the criminal service and the prevention service, dealing with the co-ordination of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings at the regional and local level (under implementation), covering trafficking in human beings and mechanisms to which the victim of modern slavery is subject, the rights of the victim and support for victims, identification of victims of trafficking in human beings, including profiling of potential victims, conducting meetings with the public by functionaries of the preventive service, daily dealing with social prophylaxis or performing tasks of reconnaissance in terms of personal, field, phenomena, and events affecting the state of safety and public order,
- Developing a spot on preventing trafficking in human beings and broadcasting it online, on the websites and social media of Police organisational units and, in public offices, non-governmental institutions, activity partners, etc., country borders.
- The 1-day international conference summarizing the project, which is an opportunity to exchange experiences and best practices in the field of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, the task is scheduled for December this year.

The Ministry of Education and Science, with an aim to protecting the mental health of children and adolescents, has prepared programmes aimed at improving children's and adolescents' access to psychological and pedagogical assistance, developing the competence of personnel in the field of social prevention, as well as preparing systemic solutions conducive to improving the quality of education, taking into account the diverse developmental and educational needs of children and adolescents. From 2019 The Minister of Education and Science ensured the operation of a nationwide, toll-free intervention and information hotline, open 24 hours, 7 days a week. The helpline provided advice from experienced psychologists, lawyers in a crisis situation, including the aftermath of peer isolation caused by the COVID-19 outbreak condition. Any young person with problems at home, at school or in peer relationships could call and get the support and necessary help with the assurance of anonymity and full discretion. From 1 November 2021, this helpline has been replaced by the Children's Ombudsman helpline. The helpline guarantees quick access to information and support, as well as interventions on issues important for the mental health and safety of children and adolescents.

The programme dedicated to psychological and pedagogical support for students and teachers is implemented by an interdisciplinary project team from Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, which has undertaken scientific co-operation with a group of scientists and experts from other entities, including the Foundation of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Lublin, non-governmental organisations and scout organisations. The programme established a Steering Committee made up of a group of experts to oversee the effective and substantive implementation and further development of the programme. As part of the project, diagnostic tests were carried out on pupils of primary schools, secondary schools, pupils of youth upbringing centres and youth sociotherapy centres, as well as on teachers, pedagogues, psychologists, therapists and parents. The second part of the project is of a practical nature. Its aim is to provide on-going psychological and pedagogical counselling and assistance to students, teachers, parents and school educators.

Based on the results of the survey, training and materials have been prepared to help teachers and school psychologists support students in coping with crisis situations. An Internet Specialist-

Counselling Platform was developed and launched, enabling qualitative research, counselling, psychological and pedagogical support by specialists and training for parents, teachers, students, principals and specialists. The platform is digitally accessible for people with disabilities.

In addition, 64 support co-ordinators have been appointed across the country, who are responsible for the correct flow of information to schools and parents and monitor the correct course of diagnosis and training in their regions. As part of the programme, diagnostic surveys of the mental well-being of pupils, parents, teachers and professionals were carried out in a random sample of 1,200 schools across Poland. The quantitative research resulted in the development of six diagnostic reports concerning the quality of life of pupils at different levels of education and the psychosocial factors determining the level of quality of life in this group. The reports also concern the support provided to children and adolescents by parents and teachers, as well as specialists (psychologists and school educators). 1,200 training hours were also carried out in 143 training courses in various areas.

Parallel to the training and quantitative research carried out and the support organised, in-depth qualitative research is also carried out on the most important difficulties, problems, needs and expectations of pupils, parents, teachers and principals, with the aim of gaining a fuller understanding of the individual situations of the various actors involved in the educational process and adjusting the forms of support on an ongoing basis. Sources for analysis within the framework of qualitative research include focus interviews.

The programme will conclude with the creation of a model of assistance and support for students and teachers in crisis situations, which will be submitted to the Ministry of Education and Science by November 2022.

Activities undertaken by the National Centre for Counteracting Addictions (NCPU) for counteracting violence focus on issues concerning domestic violence. Accordingly, in the reporting period, information and education tasks were carried out, which, among other things, drew attention to various forms of domestic violence, including against women and girls, and also highlighted that age, disability, use of psychoactive substances, etc. are important risk factors for violence.

Within the framework of the task "Dissemination of knowledge about the phenomenon of violence in the family, especially with alcohol problems and the possibility to get help - a series of articles in the women's press", 21 articles on various aspects of domestic violence prevention were published in seven magazines published by Bauer Publishing House. Articles contain topics on the specifics of the phenomenon, mechanisms and forms of domestic violence, the impact of alcohol on domestic violence, information on how to recognise violence, where to report for help, what kind of help can be obtained by members of families with a problem of violence or procedures to protect against violence (including the "Blue Card" procedure, eviction of the perpetrator of violence, etc.).

In addition, a 12-hour training for members of interdisciplinary teams against family violence and working groups was organised on 29-30 November 2021. The training consisted of 2 thematic blocks: "Protection of persons experiencing family violence in the light of the law in force and taking into account the psychological perspective" and "Interventions on persons using violence in the light of the legal and penal conditions and taking into account the psychological perspective". Almost 80 persons participated in the training. A similar training will be held on 3-4 October 2022.

During the period under review, the NCPU announced a competition for the task "Study of attitudes of health care representatives towards the phenomenon of domestic violence and their competence in contacting patients and intervening in situations of suspected domestic violence", which will be implemented in the period from 1 October 2022 to 30 June 2023.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

The special act of 12 March 2022 on assistance to Ukrainian citizens in connection with the armed conflict on the territory of that state entered into force. It originally covered only Ukrainian nationals and their spouses who came to Poland directly from Ukraine because of the ongoing war. Citizens of Ukraine covered by the special act are entitled to stay for up to 18 months. A set of rights accompanies the right to stay under the Temporary Protection Directive. These include access to healthcare, accommodation, meals, the labour market, primary and secondary education, kindergartens, nurseries, and social benefits. The EU Temporary Protection Directive covers non-Ukrainian citizens who fled Ukraine. They had to apply for refugee status or other forms of legal residence, such as a residence permit issued for work if they wanted to stay in Poland.

On 29 January 2022, an amendment was introduced into the Act of 12 December 2013 on Foreigners concerning a definition of a minor child as regards family members of foreigners entitled to family reunification in Poland as well as the definition of unaccompanied minor refugee or granted subsidiary protection entitled to family reunification with their ascendant in a straight line or other adults legally responsible for a minor, in line with the ECJ rulings in cases: C-133/19, C-136/19, C-137/19 as well as C-550/16. A person is considered a minor child as a family member of a foreigner entitled to family reunification in Poland if they were minor at the moment of application for the family reunification residence permit. A person is considered an unaccompanied minor refugee or granted subsidiary protection entitled to family reunification with their ascendant in a straight line or other adults legally responsible for a minor if, on the day of applying for international protection, the person was an unaccompanied minor on the territory of the Republic of Poland or left unattended afterward, who later reached the age of majority. The application for a family reunification residence permit was submitted within 6 months from the day of obtaining the refugee status or granting subsidiary protection.

5.2 Policy changes

The existing practice regarding protecting women and girls against violence has been maintained. During the accommodation of persons in centres for asylum seekers, their family and health situation is considered. Single women, single mothers with children requiring special treatment can be accommodated in the centre dedicated solely to single women or mothers with children. Access to such facilities is restricted and there is a guard on duty and a CCTV system installed there. All centres have a medical point staffed with doctors and nurses. It is also worth mentioning that the Office for Foreigners is a party to the agreement concerning standard procedures related to the reaction in case of sexual violence as well as gender-related violence in the context of which the local co-operation teams work in refugee centres comprising centre staff, local police, UNHCR, NGO. There is also a procedure for dealing with information related to underage marriage that includes the model of action in case the marriage mentioned above is about to take place. The creation of this procedure was aimed at protecting girls from early and forced marriages.

5.3 Institutional changes

In connection with the war in Ukraine, Poland introduced solutions aimed at facilitating the crossing of the state border concerning evacuating citizens of Ukraine and Non-Ukrainian citizens. Additionally, institutional co-operation and rules of conduct have been introduced in the event of the appearance of children from orphanages and unaccompanied minors at the Polish-Ukrainian border. Border Guards launched a hotline to inform foreigners about the rules of crossing the border, the possibility of legalizing the stay, and the locations of reception centers in Poland.

Polish Office for Foreigners signed the contract to provide medical services for the foreigners evacuated from Afghanistan. Polish Office for Foreigners signed the agreement on providing medical services for foreigners under temporary protection in Poland on 30 June 2022.

5.4 Research and awareness raising.

Concerning the war in Ukraine, Border Guard officers received appropriate refreshment training on the rules of conduct in the case of identifying persons who are victims/witnesses of a crime of human trafficking. In addition, at border crossings and reception points, leaflets included information on the phenomenon of human trafficking and steps which should be taken by a potential victim, contact details, and telephone numbers to organisations and institutions where refugees can obtain help.

Specialised pieces of training for Border Guard officers were organised on return procedures and granting protection against expulsion, which included the issue of the gender dimension.

Polish Office for Foreigners carried out many actions in that regard in co-operation with numerous organisations, NGOs, as well as with social assistance institutions, including pieces of training for refugee centre staff such as training organised by ICMPD on domestic and sexual violence, training organised by La Strada Foundation on trafficking of persons, training organised by Caritas on support for single women. Polish Office for Foreigners also organised pieces of training for women and girls at the centres, such as art workshops, English language courses, and others. Additionally, orientation courses for newcomers to the centres are organised.

Romania

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

- Draft Order of the Minister of Family, Youth and Equal Opportunities regarding the approval of framework action plans for the application of legal provisions regarding equal opportunities and treatment between women and men (for both internal human resource management policies and policies, programmes and projects specific to the field of activity, according to Art. 23[^]2 paragraph (1) of Law No. 202/2002, updated) – *under approval*.
- Draft Decision of the Secretary of State for the approval of the anti-harassment Policy at the workplace applicable within the structures of the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men - *under approval*.

1.2 Policy changes

- The draft Government Decision on the approval of the National Strategy regarding the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men and for preventing and combating of domestic violence for the period 2021-2027, which is in the inter-institutional approval circuit. This draft normative act ensures the fulfilment of the favourable condition regarding gender equality from the perspective of the programming of European funds in the period 2021-2027 and preserves the integrated vision by approaching the issue on two basic pillars, one for each of the two fields of activity within the competence of ANES.
- The Practical Guide Regarding Moral Harassment at the Workplace based on the inter-institutional partnership between the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (ANES) and the Romanian Institute for Human Rights (IRDO), within the National Campaign for Awareness of Moral Harassment at the Workplace, Stage II.

1.3 Institutional changes

- The working group for the establishment and operation of the National Consultative Council for the Integration of the Gender Perspective in the Academic Environment.
- The working group for the standardisation of action framework plans regarding equal opportunities and treatment between women and men in the public and private environment.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

- ANES organised a series of events, in the context of marking the International Women's Day - March 8, the Day of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men - May 8, the Week of Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women – 25 November, International Human Rights Day – 10 December.
- The national media campaign (TV spot), in partnership with the Romanian Television Society and CNA - the presentation of a TV spot to promote the free national telephone line intended for victims of domestic violence, discrimination based on sex and human trafficking, which operates at the ANES level, with a continuous schedule, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with no. unique 0800 500 333.
- Communication campaign to raise awareness about equal opportunities and treatment between women and men in Romania, at the initiative of the French Embassy in Romania, in the context of the continuation of the Franco-Romanian Declaration of Intent to support equal opportunities and treatment between women and men.
- National Campaign for Awareness of Moral Harassment at the Workplace

1.5 Other pertinent developments

- Implementation of the two Action Plans with specific measures: the Plan of measures regarding the prevention and combating of domestic violence, based on the measures imposed at the national level to combat the spread of COVID-19 and the Plan of measures regarding the prevention and combating of forms of discrimination based on gender, including gender violence, in the context of combating the spread of COVID-19.

The two plans include complex measures that cover, among others: the scope of permanent information campaigns for women, the provision of support through social services, innovative measures adapted to the COVID 19 pandemic (e.g., the Bright Sky application launched in partnership with VODAFONE), campaigns of visibility and support of female professionals on the front line in the fight against the Pandemic, recommendations and instructions for local public authorities (DGASPCs and COJES-URIs).

<https://anes.gov.ro/plan-de-masuri-privind-prevenirea-si-combaterea-violentei-domestice-pe-fondul-masurilor-impuse-la-nivel-national-pentru-combaterea-raspandirii-covid-19/>;

<https://anes.gov.ro/plan-de-masuri-privind-prevenirea-si-combaterea-violentei-domestice-pe-fondul-masurilor-impuse-la-nivel-national-pentru-combaterea-raspandirii-covid-19/>.

- Legislative changes regarding the prohibition of sexist acts and the criminalisation of sexist hate speech. Besides the regulation from 2020 of moral harassment at work, at this moment, at the level of National Agency for Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men (ANES), steps are taken for setting up a working group for the elaboration of the project for amending the Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and equal treatment for women and men, it is in the final stage of elaboration, which will focus on:

-the mandatory existence of an equal opportunity expert,

- the obligation to organise primary information courses for public employers (annually).

- Elaboration of a Practical Guide on Moral Harassment In The Workplace based on the inter-institutional partnership between the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men (ANES) and the Romanian Institute for Human Rights (IRDO), within the National Campaign for Awareness of Moral Harassment in the Workplace, Stage II.

- Following the recent partnership between the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men and the Ministry of Education, 10,000 teachers will be involved in promoting non-discrimination and equal opportunities, teachers we encourage to address the issue of bullying, but also the of cyber-bullying.

- NAEO and the Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva contributed for the Exhibition “Not a Woman’s Job?” organised by the Director-General of UNOG, on the occasion of International Workers’ Day, in order to recognise women in their countries who have contributed to breaking down deep-rooted gender stereotypes and demonstrated that all jobs are for all people, men and women alike.

- Romania contributed to this exhibition with 2 very important portraits as follow:

1. HER ROYAL HIGHNESS MARIA OF ROMANIA (29 October 1875 – 18 July 1938)

Marie of Romania was the last Queen of Romania. HRH Marie undertook a diplomatic tour of the United States and then, in France, she shocked many officials by waving her ministers aside and leading negotiations herself. The Paris Conference resulted in the international recognition of Greater Romania, thus doubling Ferdinand and Marie's kingdom and increasing the population by ten million.

2. Lieutenant Commander Mrs Simona Maiercan – Pilot with the Strategic Airlift Capacity Romanian

Lieutenant Commander Simona Maiercan the first Romanian to fly a supersonic aircraft (2009, MiG-21 Lancer). A pilot within the NATO-supported Strategic Airlift Capability programme and is part of a multinational team from 12 NATO member and partner nations who have flown several missions

to deliver medical supplies and equipment to Allies and other countries in need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

<https://sites.ungeneva.org/not-a-womans-job/eastern-european-group/her-royal-highness-maria-of-romania.html>

<https://sites.ungeneva.org/not-a-womans-job/eastern-european-group/simona-maiorean.html>

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

- Decision No. 69/2022 for the approval of the substantiation note regarding the necessity and opportunity of carrying out the expenses related to the investment project “Operationalisation of the electronic monitoring computer system”. Currently, we are closer than ever to achieving this common goal, which will mark the moment of the establishment of guarantees regarding compliance with provisional protection orders and protection orders, and the promotion of HG No. 69/2022 constitutes the basis for starting the procurement procedures in order to the appropriate endowment of the Romanian Police with hardware and software equipment and infrastructure, as well as with electronic surveillance devices. The value approved by this normative act for the operationalisation of the system is 241 million lei (including VAT). According to GD No. 69/2022, in the first phase, this year, for the operationalisation of SIME, funds in the amount of 32 million lei were provided in the budget of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, for the purchase of a No. of 964 hardware and software infrastructure monitoring kits, which will be functional, at the level of Bucharest municipality and in three counties, within the pilot project will be carried out for a duration of four years. The pilot project will, in the first stage, include the monitoring of the way of compliance with the measures provided under Law No. 217/2003 for provisional protection orders and protection orders, but it will also apply to European protection orders.
- Government Decision No. 592/2021 regarding the approval of the National Strategy for the prevention and combating of sexual violence “SINERGIE” 2021 - 2030 and the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for the prevention and combating of sexual violence “SINERGIE” 2021 - 2030. This strategy includes measures aimed at reducing the negative evolution / the increase in cases of sexual violence and to prevent recurrence, in general through counselling actions for children, girls/women, but also through other measures to support and improve the intervention of professionals.
- Government Decision No. 559/2021 regarding the approval of the integrated national programme for the protection of victims of domestic violence and the framework methodology regarding the organisation and operation of the integrated innovative national network of sheltered housing intended for victims of domestic violence. The decision provides the institutional and procedural framework for co-ordination, necessary for the implementation of integrated protection and support measures for the socio-professional integration/reintegration of victims of domestic violence through the integrated innovative national network of sheltered housing intended for victims of domestic violence, being particularly important through the innovative character of the measures proposed at the national level.

2.2 Policy changes

- The draft Decision on the approval of the National Strategy regarding the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men and the prevention and combating of domestic violence for the period 2021-2027, which is in the inter-institutional approval circuit. This draft normative act ensures the fulfilment of the favourable condition regarding gender equality from the perspective of the programming of European funds in the period 2021-2027 and preserves the integrated vision by approaching the issue on two basic pillars, one for each of the two fields of activity within the competence of ANES.

- Order of the Minister of Family, Youth and Equal Opportunities(MFTES) regarding the approval of action framework plans for the application of legal provisions regarding equal opportunities and treatment between women and men (under approval).
- The joint order regarding the approval of the working procedure regarding the measures to prevent cases of domestic violence (MFTES/ANES-Ministry of Internal Affairs (MAI) - Ministry of Justice (MJ) - (under approval).
- The joint order on the approval of the inter-institutional work procedure on the reporting, collection and monitoring of data on domestic violence (MFTES- ANES-MAI-MJ) – under approval.
- Order of the Minister of Family, Youth and Equal Opportunities on the approval of the minimum standard on case management for perpetrators. Under approval.
- Order of the Minister of Family, Youth and Equal Opportunities regarding the approval of the minimum standard on case management for victims. Under approval.
- Order of the Minister of Family, Youth and Equal Opportunities regarding the approval of the multidisciplinary intervention methodology in situations of sexual violence - in the process of approval.

2.3 Institutional changes

- Working group for the implementation of the National Strategy for the prevention and combating of sexual violence "SINERGIE" 2021-2030 and the Action Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for the prevention and combating of sexual violence "SINERGIE" 2021-2030 (HG No. 592/2021).
- Working group for the implementation of the integrated national programme for the protection of victims of domestic violence and of the framework methodology regarding the organisation and operation of the integrated innovative national network of sheltered housing intended for victims of domestic violence (HG No. 559/ 2021).
- The Interministerial Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence and the Support and Monitoring Committee of the POCU 465/4/4/128038 "VENUS - TOGETHER FOR A SAFE LIFE!" project.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

- Between September and November 2022, the Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men carries out the information, promotion and publicity campaign within the "VENUS - Together for a safe life!" Project. The campaign aims to provide information and promotion regarding the activities and services created within the VENUS project - TOGETHER FOR A SAFE LIFE! and to highlight the relevant aspects related to the phenomenon of domestic violence, the legislative provisions in force, as well as the protection measures from which victims of domestic violence can benefit, thus ensuring a co-ordinated national and regional dissemination of messages on this topic.
- Within the Campaign, eight regional events will be held in order to raise awareness and sensitise professionals from the central and local public administration (366 people) regarding the prevention and combating of domestic violence from the perspective of the new legislative regulations, in accordance with the Istanbul Convention, as well as actions specific for increasing social responsibility and promoting volunteering initiatives.

- Also, 1 TV Spot and a Radio Spot will be produced and broadcast. The campaign regarding the prevention and combating of domestic violence will aim, in particular, to raise awareness of victims of domestic violence and to raise the awareness of professionals from the central and local public administration regarding the prevention and combating of domestic violence from the perspective of the new legislative regulations, in accordance with the Istanbul Convention, as well as the specific actions necessary to increase social responsibility and the promotion of volunteering initiatives.

- At the level of the central and local public administration, the National Working Methodology on the identification and selection of victims of domestic violence who require separation from the aggressor and support for the transition to an independent life and the National Programme of the Integrated National Programme for the Protection of Victims of Domestic Violence and methodology regarding the organisation and operation of the integrated national network of sheltered housing intended for victims of domestic violence (approved by GD No. 559/2021)
- Also, through the content of informative and advertising materials, information specific to the field will be brought to the attention of the general public and professionals (for example: information on the rights of victims of domestic violence, human rights, on social rights and benefits, etc.), the description of ways of support and protection that victims can receive (issuance of the protection order, issuance of the provisional protection order), as well as the obligations of the authorities in order to prevent domestic violence. At the same time, specialists from various fields involved in preventing and combating domestic violence will have the opportunity to debate this aspect and share examples of good practice from their own experience.
- This will contribute to increasing the capacity of the responsible public authorities and institutions to act in co-ordination and in partnership in order to prevent and combat the phenomenon.
- Thus, information events/campaigns will be carried out at the level of local authorities. During the campaigns, a series of messages will be sent regarding non-violent attitudes and behaviours, the elimination of stereotypes and prejudices, the need to reduce gender inequalities and the phenomenon of domestic violence, which will be addressed both to the general public and to professionals from the authorities and public institutions, victims and potential victims, civil society, etc., thereby increasing awareness of the negative effects of domestic violence, better information, awareness and awareness of the entire society on equal opportunities between women and men, rights man and the development of non-violent attitudes and behaviours among the population.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.2 Policy changes

In Romania, gender equality is a fundamental principle of human rights regulated by the law, with a wide application in various fields of activity with important economic, social, political and cultural implications.

Besides the Romanian Constitution the principle of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men is enshrined both at the legislative and public policies levels. This principle is regulated by Law No. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment between women and men, republished, amended and supplemented, which provides for the measures to promote equal opportunities and treatment between women and men in all spheres of public life in Romania and defines terms such as: equal opportunities between women and men, discrimination on the grounds of sex, direct or indirect discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment, equal pay for work of equal value, positive actions, multiple discrimination, sex, gender, gender stereotypes, gender-based violence. This law contains also specific chapters in which the measures regarding the respect of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men in the labour market, participation in decision making, education, elimination of gender roles and stereotypes are presented.

At the same time, the Government Ordinance No. 137/ 2000, republished, regulates the prevention and sanctioning of all forms of discrimination, including the discrimination on gender criteria.

3.3 Institutional changes

- Through the predefined project, "Support for The Implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Romania" implemented by the NAEO, will be envisaged the development of individualised training plans, collective training strategy and training manuals for the staff of the NAEO and other institutions under the methodological co-ordination.
Thus, an evaluation will be carried out and will be developed Individualised Training Plans and a Collective Training Strategy.
Based on the abovementioned deliverables, the training materials (manual) will be elaborated and delivered to the participants at the training session but also to the other relevant authorities with responsibilities in the field: General Directorate for Social Assistance and Child Protection(47), Territorial Labour Inspectorate(42), Police County Inspectorate(42) County Commissions for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (42 CCEO) , Inter-ministerial Committee for the Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence(12), the National Commission for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men(15).
- ANES actively participates annually in the initial and ongoing training of police officers through a constant partnership with the Institute for Public Order Studies focusing on two training modules addressing domestic violence and gender equality. Within these training programmes the focus moves on the practical side by proposing case studies and exercises.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

- The VioGen RoJust project is carried out within the Open Call for projects "Human rights - Implementation at the national level", Area 17 "Human rights - Implementation at the national level", EEA Grants 2014-2021, by the National Agency for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, as Project Promoter, in partnership with: TRANSCENA Association, ANAIS Association, FILIA Centre and GRADO Association.

Through its specific activities, the project will generate long-term positive effects, which can systematically contribute to increasing the degree of understanding of the profile of the victim of domestic and gender violence, his needs, and ways of addressing them, in order to avoid any forms of discrimination and increasing confidence in the justice system, as a corollary of respecting women's rights and facilitating access to justice, as an essential part of fundamental human rights, as follows:

- The creation, development and promotion at regional/multi-regional/national level of mechanisms for the protection of the rights of vulnerable persons and measures to combat discrimination and/or to promote human rights, piloted at national level, with an emphasis on victims of discrimination on the basis of sex and domestic violence or gender-based violence;
- Initiation and promotion of an initial and continuous professional training/training programme for judges, lawyers, prosecutors and police officers regarding the implementation of international documents on human rights ratified by Romania (CEDO, CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, in Lanzarote) and the avoidance of procedural defects that determined the ECtHR to issue Decisions by which Romania was sentenced to pay sums as compensation;
- Carrying out a national information and awareness campaign for public opinion and professionals in the judicial field and in the field of preventing and combating domestic violence and gender-based violence regarding respect for victims' rights, avoiding re-victimisation and non-discrimination;
- Creation of an online platform as a resource point for informing public opinion, with a segment dedicated to professionals in the field: judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police officers and a component dedicated to reporting abuses in the judicial system (police, prosecutors' offices, courts) and providing advice/ the guidance of vulnerable persons) regarding the defence of their rights and the methods of reporting to the competent authorities
- Organisation of a VioGen RoJust virtual legal caravan, at the national level, in order to increase the capacity of national institutions to put into practice the recommendations resulting from ECtHR judgments and other specific country recommendations;

- Carrying out advocacy activities that allow the creation of effective communication mechanisms between different institutional actors with responsibilities in the process of implementing country decisions and recommendations on abuse, domestic violence and gender violence;
- Elaboration of a Study on ECtHR jurisprudence relevant for judicial professionals and examples of good practice.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.2 Policy changes

The draft Decision on the approval of the National Strategy regarding the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men and the prevention and combating of domestic violence for the period 2021-2027, which is in the inter-institutional approval circuit. This draft normative act ensures the fulfilment of the favourable condition regarding gender equality from the perspective of the programming of European funds in the period 2021-2027 and preserves the integrated vision by approaching the issue on two basic pillars, one for each of the two fields of activity within the competence of ANES.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

1. Under the Gender Equality week which starts every year on 8th of May, ANES has launched a series of campaigns oriented in special on promoting the importance of women in decision-making, leadership, political life.

2. At the same time, at national level, in the field of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men, in accordance with the stage of implementation of the OECD recommendation on gender equality in public life (to which Romania has expressed its intention to adhere), ANES advanced important issues of national interest on: streamlining the implementation of gender equality and gender mainstreaming initiatives and ensuring a balanced participation of women and men in decision-making and leadership.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.5 Other pertinent developments

In the context of the Ukraine war, Romania ranks second among states that received refugees, most of them women and children, according to data from the International Organization for Migration). As a Humanitarian Hub for Refugee Support in Ukraine, Romania had a special responsibility to address sexual and reproductive health and related rights as a priority in assisting and supporting actions in approaching abuse and harassment in conflict situations.

In this context, the Romanian state has established a clear decision-making and co-ordination structure in order to enable law enforcement agencies, at all levels of government, to plan, co-ordinate and interact effectively on the ground, in response to the humanitarian refugee crisis.

A high-level decision-making Task Force, under the co-ordination of the Prime Minister, has been set up at the Government level since the first day of the conflict.

Secondly, an operational Task Force, called the "Ukraine Commission", headed by the Prime Minister's Chancellery, has been set up to oversee the activities of the ministries involved in managing the flow of refugees in all areas of intervention.

Thirdly, at the level of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, the Strategic Co-ordination Group for Humanitarian Assistance was set up, led by a State Councillor, in order to ensure the strategic

framework for humanitarian response and to facilitate co-operation between agencies and partners at national, European and international level.

Romania's response to the refugee crisis is structured on two levels of intervention: the first response, emergency assistance and the second response, protection.

The first response, emergency assistance, is basically the reaction and urgent intervention provided by Romania for newly arrived refugees from Ukraine. The Department for Emergency Situations (DSU), within the Ministry of Internal Affairs, led the operations at this stage, consisting in the deployment of resources and capacities at the main border crossing points, on the way to enter the country, in providing humanitarian transport, emergency shelter, food, basic health care, etc.

These operations were complemented by the intense legislative and administrative work of the various ministries within the Romanian Government, which issued a large number of legislative acts in order to meet the urgent needs of refugees. Local authorities have also co-ordinated their efforts with government agencies, developing their own operational plans based on local needs assessments. The public effort was strongly supported by Romanian civil society, international NGO's, UN agencies and private actors.

The second response, protection, is a mechanism developed to ensure medium and long-term protection, also inclusion measures for Ukrainian refugees who choose to live in Romania.

For the second stage of intervention, the Government has set up six working groups to develop measures for inclusion and protection policy in the following areas: health, education, employment, housing, vulnerable people, children and young people. Each working group draws up sectoral action plans, in collaboration with counterpart ministries, UN agencies and civil society representatives.

The sectoral action plans will be integrated into a National Action Plan, representing Romania's second protection response to the humanitarian refugee crisis. Inclusion and protection policy measures are to be discussed and feedback will also be gathered from local government representatives to ensure co-ordination and assistance. The whole process is overseen by the Strategic Co-ordination Group for Humanitarian Assistance within the Chancellery of the Prime Minister.

Also, the Government in partnership with civil society has developed a Platform to support Ukrainian refugees with information on their rights in Romania - www.dopomoha.ro.

We are taking all measures for humanitarian aid to continue to consider both the gender and the age dimension, and aim at their integration, taking into account the specific needs, vulnerabilities and capabilities of all people.

The Romanian authorities together with international actors and the non-governmental environment continue to concentrate their efforts to ensure the implementation of all necessary measures in order to address the crisis from a gender perspective, by respecting the civil and humanitarian nature of refugee camps, taking into account the needs of women and girls, physical protection, prevention of acts of sexual and gender-based violence, in accordance with the provisions of the National Strategy and the National Action Plan on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) - Women, Peace and Security for 2020 - 2023 (Pillar IV Aid and Recovery).

Also, at the level of National Agency for Equal opportunities between women and men, formalities have been initiated for the identification of Ukrainian-speaking volunteers to facilitate support for domestic violence victims of Ukrainian origin, located in Romania, who request information through our national free line, 0800 500 333 a hotline designed for domestic violence victims.

- The International Organization for Migration (IOM) - the Romanian Mission with ANES will develop and implement the project submitted by OIM, the Global Help Association and the Ecumenical Association of Romanian Churches - AIDRom in the field of integration of migrants (beneficiaries of a form of protection and third-country nationals) from Region 6, within the National Programme - Fund for Asylum, Migration and Integration, call for projects FAMI / 20.03.
- Project “Initiative to Building National and Local Expertise, Exchange and Engagement for Enhanced Gender Equality in the Romanian Public Sector. Mandatory basic training course on gender equality for all public service employees.” This initiative is based on the partnership between ANES, International Organization for Migration (IOM)- Romanian Mission and with financial support from Swedish Embassy Bucharest.
- ANES as a Equalcity Trainee Cities agree to join in the information seminars within the project “Equalcity ”- funded by the EU’s Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (2014-2020) initiated by International Organization for Migration (IOM)- Brussels Mission. The Equalcity Project aims to strengthen the capacity of frontline services in providing improved identification, referral, assistance, and recovery of survivors of SGBV within migrant communities, and to empower migrants and frontline workers through awareness raising on SGBV and migrants’ rights.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

The draft Decision on the approval of the National Strategy regarding the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men and the prevention and combating of domestic violence for the period 2021-2027, which is in the inter-institutional approval circuit. This draft normative act ensures the fulfilment of the favourable condition regarding gender equality from the perspective of the programming of European funds in the period 2021-2027 and preserves the integrated vision by approaching the issue on two basic pillars, one for each of the two fields of activity within the competence of ANES.

6.5 Other pertinent developments.

In the context of marking seven years since the adoption of law 23/2015 for declaring 8 May the day of equal opportunities between women and men in Romania, ANES carried out a series of online actions under the umbrellas of the week of equal opportunities between women and men.

The planned actions aimed at preventing and combating discrimination based on gender, including gender-based violence, and aimed at raising awareness of the real benefits that society brings by respecting and promoting the principle of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men. At the level of ANES there are campaigns in different stage of implementation, as follow:

- National Campaign for Awareness of Moral Harassment in the Workplace
- “ADVERTISING FOR EQUALITY” awareness-raising and competition campaign with the aim of promoting gender-sensitive advertising at the level of advertising companies and for mobilizing advertising companies to promote, respect and encourage gender equality through messages advertising that they produce and transmit. Campaign in process of implementation in partnership with -University of Bucharest, Faculty of Political Sciences,
- FemTalk Diasopra Campaign,
- FemTalk Campaign - 2nd edition, with the participation of 10 Ambassador Ladies.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

The Period 2021 and 2022 has been a full of challenges regarding the backlashes after the Covid-19 pandemic in the field of gender equality and gender-based violence doubled by the war situation near the Romanian borders.

Authorities have been aware of the situation and took measure in order to gather all the relevant actors in the field to understand their new attributions and obligations and also to implement action plans, to regulate the legislation in the field, enhancing the measures according with the provisions of Istanbul Convention also with the strategies and policies in the field.

At the same time, it has been finally understood that progresses cannot be done without interinstitutional co-operation and co-ordination and without the involvement of the private sector and civil society.

Serbia

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

The Strategy for Gender Equality for the period from 2021 to 2030 ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 103/2021) was adopted on 14 October 2021 and the *Action Plan for 2022 and 2023 for the implementation of the Strategy* passed the process of public discussion and was adopted at the session of the Government of the Republic of Serbia held on 25 August 2022.

The Law on Gender Equality ("Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia", No. 52/21) introduces the term "gender-sensitive language" for the first time into the normative sphere and in Article 6, item 17) specifies that gender-sensitive language is a language and Article 73 prescribes that the application of gender-sensitive language takes effect three years after the adoption of this Law, i.e., in 2024.

Amendments to the Criminal Code from 2012, Article 54a, introduced a special circumstance for determining a criminal offence committed out of hatred, insofar as it is prescribed that if a criminal offense was committed out of hatred due to race and religion, nationality or ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity of another person, the court will deem that circumstance an aggravating circumstance, unless it is prescribed as a feature of the criminal offence.

According to the available statistical data in accordance with the aforementioned records, as of 30 June 2022:

- Article 54a of the Criminal Code was applied in 32 cases;
- The conviction was issued in 11 cases, while in 3 cases no incitement of hatred was demonstrated;
- Plea agreement referred to in Article 313 of the Criminal Procedure Code was concluded in 4 cases and 4 judgments were pronounced by which the court accepts the plea agreement;
- Principle of opportunity, i.e., deferring of criminal prosecution referred to in Article 283 of the Criminal Procedure Code has not been applied in any case;
- Decision on dismissal of criminal charges was made in 7 cases, other cases in progress;
- When it comes to a personal characteristic within the meaning of Article 54a of the Criminal Code, in most cases it is an actual or assumed sexual orientation (16) and nationality (14);
- The prison sentence was imposed in three cases, of which in two cases the prison sentence that the convicted person will serve in the premises where he/she lives, while the suspended sentence was imposed in eight cases.

1.2 Policy changes

Annual summary reports on the realisation of gender equality in the Republic of Serbia follow the structure and content of the Law on Gender Equality and contain data from competent public authorities, economic entities and the non-governmental sector related to the prohibitions of mobbing and discrimination of employees at the workplace, the elimination of the pay gap between women and men, giving incentives for greater representation of women in small- and medium-sized enterprises and in entrepreneurship, financial support for the implementation of the National Employment Service programme for the purpose of retraining, additional education or employment and self-employment of vulnerable groups of the population, among which the most numerous are women, including the concrete effects of the implementation of these programmes, etc.

1.3 Institutional changes

All citizens of the Republic of Serbia may appeal to the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality if they consider that their human rights have been violated based on their sex, and the Commissioner then takes further steps within their competence and informs the public thereof and reports in their regular annual reports.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

Within the *Strategy for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination for the period from 2022 to 2030* (“Official Gazette of RS”, No. 12/2022) and the specific objective 3 - Improved equality and greater social inclusion of members of groups at increased risk of discrimination, a measure 3.1 was created - Reduced stereotypes and prejudices towards members of groups at risk of discrimination, and a positive public image of these groups was promoted thus influencing the change in social perceptions and values.

The Commissioner for Refugees and Migration prepares the document Migration Profile of the Republic of Serbia, which serves as a means of monitoring migration flows and trends in the country and based on which mechanisms for collecting migration data are established and developed. **All data in the Migration Profile, where possible, are classified by sex** and age, but also by other categories. As the data are updated each year, data monitoring and policy-making that takes into account women’s needs is enabled.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The Strategy for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination 2022-2030 (“Official Gazette of RS”, No. 12/2022), within the specific objective 4 - Improved system of prevention and protection against discrimination, a measure 4.4 was created - Improved mechanism for combating and prevention of hate speech, which in particular implies the fight against hate speech on the Internet.

The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, in co-operation with the Colour Media Association, organised a conference on 24 February 2022, at the Palace of Serbia in Belgrade, with the topic “Human rights in the digital age”, and the representatives of the Ministry participated in the work of several conferences and round tables, and appeared in the media, promoting the implementation of a set of anti-discrimination laws and strategic measures in gender equality during the reporting period.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The new Law on the Protector of Citizens, which entered into force on 16 November 2021, stipulates that the Protector of Citizens perform the tasks of a national rapporteur in the field of trafficking in human beings.

At the end of 2021, the **Law on the Rights of Users of Temporary Accommodation Services in Social Protection** (“Official Gazette of RS” No. 126/2021) was adopted, which, in part II - **Principles**, Article 5, defines the **principle of non-discrimination of users**: “The exercise of user rights shall be enabled without discrimination on the basis of race, skin colour, ancestry, nationality or ethnic origin, **sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, sex characteristics, etc.**”

In the last quarter of 2021, as part of the process of adopting the Law on Amendments to the Family Law, the Ministry for Family Care and Demography drafted that law, and the adoption of that act is planned for 2022.

Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality, Prof. Zorana Mihajlovic, PhD, has launched an initiative for introducing the notion of femicide into criminal legislation. The initiative was submitted to the Ministry of Justice on 16 August 2022 and we expect that after the establishment of the new Government of the Republic of Serbia, the Ministry of Justice will recognise the importance of this initiative and support its introduction into the criminal legislation of the Republic of Serbia.

2.2 Policy changes

The National Strategy for the Prevention and Combating of Gender-Based Violence against Women and Domestic Violence 2021-2025 is substantively linked to strategies related to key areas defined by the *Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence*.

The Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality, with the support of the United Nations Development Fund for Serbia (UNDP), has initiated and continues to work on the initiative for the establishment of the Central Record of Domestic Violence. The consultative process brought together all relevant state institutions and bodies involved in the system of prevention of violence and acting in cases of violence – the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the National Public Prosecutor’s Office, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health.

On 15 November 2021, the Minister of Interior of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Instructions on the manner of acting of the employees of the Ministry of Interior in cases of human trafficking with indicators for preliminary identification of victims of human trafficking for the police and written information on the rights of victims of human trafficking and available forms of support. This Instruction stipulates that police officers take into account gender-specific needs and gender-specific vulnerabilities of victims of trafficking in human beings when dealing with potential or identified victims of trafficking.

A draft Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy for the Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children for 2022 has been developed and has entered the procedure of obtaining opinions from the competent institutions and the Action Plan is expected to be adopted in the second half of the year. What is important is that although the Action Plan has not been formally adopted, the envisaged activities are being implemented.

2.3 Institutional changes

The Report on the Work of the Council for Combating Domestic Violence for 2021 was adopted by the Government of the Republic of Serbia by its Conclusion 05 No. 021-021-58/2022 at its session held on 13 January 2022 and it contains data on domestic violence in 2021, broken down by sex, age and type of violence. In the organisation of the Council for Combating Domestic Violence of the Government of the Republic of Serbia and with the professional and administrative-technical support of the Ministry of Justice, several seminars for the education of members of the Operational Team and members of the Co-ordination and Co-operation Groups operating at the local level were conducted during 2021/2022 and have an important role in the implementation of the said law.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

The project “Safety of Women and Girls in Serbia” started on 01 December 2021 and is implemented by the UN Agency for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Serbia (UN Women) in co-operation with the Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs and with the support of the United Kingdom Embassy in Belgrade. Support to national institutions and partners has started within the project in order to conduct a national survey on the safety of women and girls in public places.

The Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, in co-operation with the UN Women Agency in Serbia, the Ministry for European Integration, the European Union Delegation in Serbia and the Norwegian Embassy in Belgrade, organised the play “Cat Roast” in order to draw attention to the importance and urgency of stopping the violence against women and developing healthy and gender-sensitive behaviour patterns among young people. Within the global campaign “16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence”, buildings and landmarks of importance are illuminated in orange, with the aim of drawing public attention to the problem of violence and supporting the fight against violence. In co-operation with the Co-

ordination Body for Gender Equality, the Red Star Football Club at the League of Europe game against the Ludogorets Club placed a banner with the inscription “Stop Violence against Women” and thus supported the campaign against gender-based violence.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

The Ministry of Justice published 2,640 brochures – guidebooks on criminal, legal, civil, enforcement and misdemeanour proceedings and 3,960 leaflets for victims of gender-based violence and violence against women, which were submitted to all basic courts in the Republic of Serbia.

During 2021, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans’ Affairs and Social Affairs improved the format for reporting on the work of the Internal Teams for Violence, collected data and *prepared a Report on the functioning of the Internal Teams in 2020*.

The Ministry of Health has developed *Expert methodological instructions for individual reporting of suspicions of abuse and/or neglect of children, as well as gender-based violence/ women/ domestic violence – and the healthcare system is ready for the implementation*, which will be implemented once daily work activities related to the fight against the pandemic have subsided.

The Ministry of Interior has developed *Instructions on the conduct of police officers in cases of domestic violence and intimate partner violence, in order to improve work and support police officers who directly act on cases of domestic violence*.

In 2021, the Ministry of Defence published a brochure for the training of employees with the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces entitled “*Prevention of Discrimination and Violence in the Ministry of Defence*”, in the edition of the Media Centre “Defence”.

In the Catalogue of programmes of continuous professional development of teachers, educators and professional associates for the school year 2021/2022 of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, there are 35 programmes aimed at improving the capacity of teachers and other professional associates to act in the field of protection against gender-based violence and discrimination.

The Co-ordination Body for Gender Equality of the Government of the Republic of Serbia in partnership with the UN Agency for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Serbia (UN Women) is implementing the project “*Integrated Response to Violence against Women and Girls in Serbia III*” with the support of the Swedish Development Agency - SIDA. The aim of the project is to improve the collection of evidence by institutions and thus reduce the risk of violence against women.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

The Law on Gender Equality (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 52/21) in Article 9 prescribes **general measures for the realisation and improvement of gender equality** as measures prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex or gender in a certain area, or orders appropriate treatment for the purpose of achieving gender equality.

The protection of women before the courts can be achieved in civil, criminal and special proceedings for the protection of women against domestic violence, which provide urgent protection. In civil proceedings, complaints most often relate to alleged discrimination based on sex. Courts may apply different legal provisions when deciding on discrimination cases. However, discrimination cases often cannot be identified as such, as parties often initiate them to compensate for non-material damage due to discrimination.

3.2 Policy changes

In accordance with Article 12 of the Law on Gender Equality, statistical data collected and recorded at the Ministry of Justice in all areas where the measures referred to in this Law are implemented are classified and presented by sex and age.

3.3 Institutional changes

The analysis of employees in the Ministry of Justice, i.e., in the bodies within this ministry, which are classified by sex has shown the following: out of the total number of employees and persons engaged in work, 25.17% are men and 74.83% are women. The ministry is headed by a woman, and 46.15% of men and 53.85% of women hold senior management positions in the ministry. In the bodies within the Ministry of Justice (Administration for the Enforcement of Penal Sanctions, Directorate for the Administration of Seized Assets and the Administration for Co-operation with Churches and Religious Communities), the percentage of representation of women in relation to the total number of employees is somewhat lower and amounts to about 32% with a tendency for growth in the upcoming period.

During November 2021, a **wellness exam was organised for all employees and persons engaged in work at the ministry**, providing a set of the same medical checks and analyses, but also a set of specific medical checks that take into account biological differences between men and women and their needs.

3.4 Research and awareness raising

In order to exercise the right to timely information and **access to justice for citizens from marginalised groups**, the Ministry of Justice, with the support of the UN Agency for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Serbia (UN Women), initiated and implemented an activity whereby both deaf and hard of hearing persons will have all the necessary information. At the information desks in all 66 basic courts in the Republic of Serbia, tablets are available through which, with the help of interpreters for the Serbian sign language, each citizen can obtain the necessary information and ask a question to the official at the court information desk by establishing an Internet connection with the interpreter for the Serbian sign language, and the official will send the answer to the interpreter translating it to the person who asked the question. This is important because in our country there are citizens who exclusively and only use the Serbian sign language.

3.5 Other pertinent developments

N/A

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

Article 74, paragraph 3 of the Law on Gender Equality regulates that political parties and trade union organisations adopt the first plan of action with special measures no later than 1 January 2022.

4.2 Policy changes

In terms of the measures to support the elected representatives in balancing their private and public obligations, such measures are mainly contained in the plans of action of political parties and trade union organisations.

According to the data of the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia, with the support of the UN Agency for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Serbia (UN Women), in 2021, **three gender equality tests** were piloted for the following: (1) *the Draft Law on Simplified Work Engagement on Seasonal and Other Temporary Jobs in Certain Activities*, (2) *Draft Law on*

Amendments to the Law on Health Insurance, and (3) the Draft Law on Social Entrepreneurship.

In addition, during 2021, the Government adopted the *Programme for Improving the Governance of Public Policies and Regulatory Reform for the Period 2021-2025* (“Official Gazette of RS”, No. 113/21) and the accompanying *Action Plan for the Implementation of this Programme*, prepared by the Public Policy Secretariat of the Republic of Serbia. The **Measure 1.4. “Improving the quality of regulations through gender mainstreaming”** envisages harmonisation of gender equality test and the instructions for its implementation with the *Law on Gender Equality* (“Official Gazette of RS”, No. 52/21), improvement of the analysis of the effects of regulations on gender equality through the systemic use of the gender equality test, as well as redefining the obligation to present the results of this test within the report on the analysis of the effects of regulations, which was realised thanks to the co-operation with the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue in 2022.

In order to improve the capacities of state administration bodies for the implementation of these tools, a training programme for the use of the gender equality test was developed and training for civil servants participating in the development of regulations in areas of importance for gender equality was conducted at the National Academy of Public Administration starting from the fourth quarter of 2021 until the end of September 2022. This training is scheduled to last until 2025.

4.3 Institutional changes

Public authorities with 50 or more employees and persons engaged in work were, for the first time in 2021, in a position to appoint a person in charge of gender equality, and it happened that the employers within the private sector also did so although this legal obligation does not apply to them.

4.4 Research and awareness raising

N/A

4.5 Other pertinent developments

The Law on Gender Equality (“Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia”, No. 52/21) introduces the term “gender-sensitive language” for the first time into the normative sphere in both Article 6, item 17) and Article 73. The Law on Gender Equality stipulates that the application of gender-sensitive language shall enter into force three years following the adoption of this Law, i.e., in 2024.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.1 Legislative changes

Article 7 of the *Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection* (“Official Gazette of RS”, No. 24/18) of the said Law prescribes the principle of non-discrimination in the process of granting asylum in the Republic of Serbia. As a basis for the recognition of a refugee status, the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection recognises the fear of persecution on the basis of belonging to a certain social group, i.e., based on sex, gender, gender identity and contains provisions that standardise the acts of persecution and concern **sexual and gender-based violence**.

In addition, the officers of the Asylum Office comply with all international conventions governing this area that have been adopted by the Republic of Serbia (almost all international treaties on human rights and women’s rights have been ratified).

5.2 Policy changes

- During 2021, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, in co-operation with the Council of Europe Office in Belgrade, within the project “Prevention and Fight against Human Trafficking” (part of the programme “Horizontal Facility for the Western Balkans and Turkey”, phase 2), revised the existing indicators for the preliminary identification of victims of

human trafficking in order to strengthen the capacity of the education system for early recognition and risk assessment if a student might be a potential victim of trafficking. The result of the work of the established Working Group is a new “List of indicators for the preliminary identification of victims of trafficking in human beings for the education system”. Some of the revised indicators also apply to migrants and asylum seekers who are considered a vulnerable social group at increased risk of trafficking in human beings.

- The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, in co-operation with international and non-governmental organisations, continuously conducts workshops and informative sessions with women asylum-seekers and migrant women located in asylum and reception centres, as well as with women who have been granted asylum, to empower them in the areas of prevention of trafficking in human beings, gender-based violence, gender equality, sexual orientation, rights, obligations, etc. There are standard operating procedures for victims of sexual and gender-based violence, victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors that define the roles and responsibilities of each individual service provider involved in preventing and responding to the protection of refugee/migrant children, gender-based violence and treatment of potential victims of trafficking. Also, the minimum procedures in asylum and reception centres are defined in terms of legislative, legal, security, health and psychosocial support and protection, and they are intended for all institutions and organisations that are operational along the route of movement of migrants, as well as for those who organise short- and medium-term provision of care of refugees and migrants in the Republic of Serbia. The employees of the centres are continuously trained in the provision of adequate support and prevention of various forms of violence.

5.3 Institutional changes

- The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration provides basic material conditions for the reception of asylum seekers and temporary accommodation to persons granted asylum in accordance with the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection and to migrants staying illegally in the territory of the Republic of Serbia. All these persons are provided with access to asylum or reception centres where accommodation, food, clothing, health care are provided, including mandatory medical check at admission, psycho-social support, adequate information and free legal assistance. In addition to the above, the centres perform the identification and referral of vulnerable persons, provide protection of unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable categories of persons, as well as the information and counselling for assistance.
- In the system of enforcement of penal sanctions in the Republic of Serbia, special attention is paid to women. In relation to the conditions of enforcement of the detention measure, detained women are placed separately from other male detainees; special departments for women are organised in all institutions where the detention measure is implemented. In direct contact with detained women, women – members of the guard service – are engaged exclusively. In relation to the hygiene, health and other needs of women in all institutions where the detention measure is implemented, special conditions have been provided in accordance with their needs.

5.4 Research and awareness raising

Employees of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration reception centres provide adequate information regarding access to the asylum procedure, legal assistance, voluntary return to the country of origin and other relevant topics.

In accordance with the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, all foreigners who have expressed their intention to seek asylum and all foreigners who are undergoing the asylum procedure, equally and without distinction by sex, can use free legal assistance and representation before the competent authorities from associations whose goals and actions are aimed at providing legal

assistance to asylum seekers and persons granted the right to asylum, as well as free legal assistance provided by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

5.5 Other pertinent developments

N/A

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

The Law on Gender Equality (“Official Gazette of RS”, No. 52/21) Article 5 stipulates that public authorities be obliged to perform **gender analysis of the budget and plan revenues and expenditures with the aim of improving gender equality** in accordance with the law governing the budget system and the principle of gender equality in the budgetary procedure. The principle of gender-responsive budgeting (introduced within the overall budget for active employment policy measures and implying the equal inclusion of unemployed women and men in active employment policy measures) continues to apply. Also, in the process of implementing and monitoring the implementation of measures, activities and interventions from the employment policy system, a gender-sensitive approach is applied and seeks to achieve gender-balanced results, which are based on gender-disaggregated data.

6.2 Policy changes

Within the Special Objective of the Employment Strategy in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2021 to 2026, which refers to the Improvement of the Position of Unemployed Persons in the Labour Market, the Measure 2.4. refers to the Improvement of the Position of Women in the Labour Market, as a category of unemployed persons who should be given priority for the inclusion in financial measures of active employment policy. The focus of activities during the first three years of the implementation of the Strategy (in accordance with the Action Plan for the period from 2021 to 2023 for the implementation of the Strategy), in addition to the above, will be on the consideration of preconditions and the necessary, and currently lacking, forms of support for the balancing of work and family life, as well as the implementation of special measures to activate and encourage integration or re-integration in the labour market of women from underdeveloped and devastated areas.

6.3 Institutional changes

According to the data of the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, contained in the *Report on the Implementation of Gender Equality for the Republic of Serbia in 2021*, a total of 375 persons in charge of gender equality were appointed in the Republic of Serbia in the period from 01 June to 31 December 2021 and 16 bodies for gender equality were established.

6.4 Research and awareness raising

- In co-operation with the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Serbia, a two-day seminar “Empowering Women working in the Administration for the Enforcement of Penal Sanctions and Correctional Institutions” was organised in October 2021. The seminar was preceded by research among the employees from three important areas – gender equality, communication skills and the so-called burnout at work.

In addition, during November 2021, the Ministry of Justice, with the support of the OSCE Mission to the Republic of Serbia, conducted a three-day workshop on “Why Gender Equality is Our Topic”, which was attended by 25 participants from the Ministry of Justice and 5 participants from the Security Intelligence Agency.

Within the Professional Development Programme for Police Officers of the Ministry of the Interior in the period from November 2021 to 19 August 2022, the following topics were implemented through mandatory teaching course as part of the Theoretical teaching:

1. The notion of recognising and the responding of police to forms of discrimination – a total of 29,500 participants,
2. Police work with marginalised, minority and socially vulnerable groups – a total of 29,526 participants,
3. Police action in cases of domestic violence and intimate partner violence - a total of 29,514 participants.

In addition, the aforementioned Programme for managers of all levels of leadership within the Ministry of Interior envisages a seminar “Systematic integration of gender equality in police work through the role of a manager”. One police officer of the Border Police Directorate was involved in a one-day training on the topic of “Migration and Gender”, within the global programme “Migration and Diaspora” with the support of the German Development Agency - GIZ and with the aim of building and improving the capacity of representatives of ministries dealing with or engaged in gender and migration topics and gaining knowledge related to gender where gender is taken into account in the course of work, decision-making and execution processes, including migration management and adequate addressing of gender equality and needs of vulnerable groups in migration-related programmes.

- In July 2022, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue, in co-operation with the National Academy of Public Administration, developed a training programme for persons in charge of gender equality in public authorities (state administration and local self-government bodies).

6.5 Other pertinent developments

The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration applies affirmative action when it comes to integration and re-integration, i.e., housing and economic empowerment programmes for refugees, internally displaced persons and returnees under the Readmission Agreement through the regulations and acts that apply.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

N/A

8. Additional comments, if any

8.1 N/A

8.2. Women have suffered specific consequences caused by the COVID-19 pandemic due to higher scope of unpaid care work at home, their children’s home-based schooling, caring for elderly family members at higher risk of infection, and significantly greater restrictions on movement. Therefore, it would be very important in the coming period to pay attention to the valuation of unpaid domestic work and the establishment of an effective methodology at the global level that would enable a unique way of measuring and valuing this type of work. In this sense, the Republic of Serbia would appreciate the support from countries that are more experienced in this field as well as co-operation with them.

Slovenia

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes

With the amendment criminal Procedure Act, which came into force in October 2019, Slovenia implemented the so-called Victims Directive which regulated the situation of victims of criminal acts on a systemic and holistic level.

The amendments therefore focused upon the right for information, support and the opportunity to participate in criminal proceedings and, if necessary, appropriate protection. This changed the paradigm of dealing with the situation of victims of crimes, as the concern for their well-being and procedural rights came to the fore.

As a result, the amendment to the Act provided for a greater number of solutions concerning the position and rights of victims of criminal offences.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice established a working group for the implementation of the provisions of the amendment to the ZKP-N, which refer to the rights of victims of criminal offences. All relevant stakeholders were included in the implementation group which has created a single leaflet with the rights of victims of crimes, in Slovenian, Croatian, English, German, Italian and Hungarian language. More than 100,000 leaflets were printed, and a wider text on victims' rights is also available online: <https://www.gov.si teme/pravice-zrtev-kaznivih-dejanj/>.

The working group has also created a form for the individual assessment of victims of crimes, which is used by the police and the state prosecutor's office in their work. Furthermore, the implementation group agreed at a set of data on victims of crimes to be collected by stakeholders, and an agreement was reached on further statistical monitoring of the treatment of victims of crimes.

Furthermore a Special Victim Support Services have been established at certain District Courts (Ljubljana and Maribor), which provide injured parties with basic information on their rights (personally, via telephone or e-mail). Injured parties are moreover provided with contact information on a person/service with whom/which they can communicate.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2022 MLFSA issued a tender for financing NGO's projects in the fields of promoting equal opportunities for girls and young women to enrol in STEM programmes. Co-financed projects will contribute to raising awareness and encouraging girls and young women to enrol in STEM high school and university programmes and later enrol in STEM professions. Two projects were chosen to be financed each in the amount of approximately EUR 10,000.00.

1. Escape from stereotypes (and enter STEM): The project will be based on the idea of escape rooms, where girls will be confronted girls with the attractiveness of STEM professions and studies and try to eliminate prejudices created by gender stereotypes.
2. Garage – springboard for women in STEM professions: Mentoring programme Garage for Girls, which will contribute to greater enthusiasm for innovations and enrolment in STEM programmes.

The Action Dad project was financially supported by the European Commission under the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020. It was implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (co-ordinator) and the Peace Institute (partner). The main goal of the project was to reduce gender stereotypes in the field of reconciling work and private

life and to promote gender equality in parental responsibilities, with an emphasis on active fatherhood and the role of employers. The main activities of the project were capacity building, pilot testing of work/life balance measures for employed fathers and awareness rising. The main target groups were men as (future) fathers, employers, social care and health care experts, policy makers and general public.

Some of the project activities:

- Media campaign for the general public (including promotional videos, short documentary on active fatherhood and work-life balance, social media campaign (including the campaign on Google), a project website (<https://ockavakciji.eu/>), newspaper articles on active fatherhood and work-life balance, promotion activities of 15 project ambassadors - celebrities from the world of sport, music and TV, gadgets for future parents, posters, leaflets etc. The promotional spot on active fatherhood was actively advertised for 10 weeks in prime time on TV stations with national reach. Two comprehensive press releases on the project were sent to a large national media address. The project was also promoted at the state level in the framework of international exchanges of practices and policies with Hungary, Germany and Norway and included in the preparations for Slovenia's presidency of the European Union Council in the second half of 2021.

- Preparation of company-specific model of work-life balance measures after a 6-month-long pilot test in four participating organisations from private and public sector. Measures - that were implemented after a review of the current state of work-life balance in series of focus groups with fathers and management - were related to information and communication, education, family services, working time and work organisation. The pilot test included thematic workshops with external providers on communication, conflict resolution, time management, stress and burnout, living with a teenager and collaborating parenting. During the testing of the intervention models, working meetings and communication with fathers and employers took place.

- Training for employers on the positive aspects of work-life balance;

- Three professional training courses 'Collaborative Parenting: different disciplines for the common good' were organised in different regions of Slovenia for professionals in the fields of social work, health care and education for future parents (altogether more than 400 participants). The training was developed based on preliminary needs analysis among practitioners;

- Six awareness-raising events for fathers, children and the general public in different Slovenian regions to promote active fatherhood;

- Focus groups (with future fathers), which will be the basis for a report on the situation in Slovenia regarding active fatherhood;

- Preparation of work-life balance manual 'Employers' Handbook' for companies, work organisations, human resources departments and trade unions;

- Edition of the publication 'Active Fathers Changing the World for the Better', in which a number of well-known fathers, as project's promotors, present their reflections on their role as fathers and on their challenges in work-life balance. The publication was created to address the diversity of men in fatherhood roles and to raise public awareness of active fatherhood

- Preparation of guidelines on collaborative Parenting for professionals in health centres and social work centres that work with future parents (1,500 copies).

- Edition of the 'publication Policy Report: reconciling work and family life and the role of men as fathers', which focuses on the key mechanisms of family policy in Slovenia.

- Two study visits (to Iceland and Sweden) aimed at exchanging experiences and good practices in the European context. Beside project team, they also involved employers. They were rich in content, informative and enabled international networking

- The two-day international conference 'In a whirlwind of change in the labour market, workplaces and family life - Stakeholders working together for better outcomes and satisfaction' put the work-life balance at centre stage. It brought together different stakeholders (trade unions, employers, experts, civil society and policy makers) in a public debate on changes in working and employment patterns, organisational cultures, family, labour, social protection and health policies. The final conference was highly visible in the public and media.

- National expert symposium that presented the project's activities, promoted the EU Work-life Balance Directive and addressed the challenges of the pandemics for work-life balance and gender equality.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.2 Policy changes

In 2022 we are preparing a new Resolution on the National Programme for Prevention of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, which sets out the goals, measures and key bodies responsible for the implementation of policies for the prevention and reduction of domestic violence. its purpose will be to recognise key fields where deficiencies or poor performance in the field of prevention of violence against women and domestic violence have been detected, and to define objectives and measures for their improvement. Measures for the implementation of provisions of the Istanbul Convention will also be included. The key changes which we want to achieve by realising the objectives and accompanying measures after the Resolution expires are: (1) high quality, diverse and widely available programmes of assistance and protection of victims of domestic violence and women victims of violence, (2) improved protection, treatment, and situation of victims of such violence, (3) highly trained professional staff and experts who face the issue of domestic violence and violence against women in their work, (4) greater awareness in society about the issue and achieving a higher level of zero tolerance to such violence, (5) improved regulations in the field of prevention of domestic violence and violence against women, (6) provision of quality data about domestic violence and violence against women and (7) improved organisation in the fields of prevention of domestic violence and violence against women. All these goals are compliant with the fundamental European guidelines in the field of prevention and treatment of domestic violence and violence against women. It is expected to be adopted by the end of this year.

Also, to be defined are indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Resolution and stakeholders who will implement individual measures. Monitoring the implementation of the Resolution will be the obligation of all line ministries responsible for individual measures. Once a year, the line ministries will report on the realisation of the objectives of the Resolution and implementation of measures to the relevant ministry. A precise timeline for the implementation of measures will be defined in biannual action plans, which will be drafted after the adoption of the Resolution by the inter-ministerial working group which was established in 2018 to draft the Resolution, and which also features representatives of NGOs active in the field of prevention of domestic violence and violence against women. It is expected to be adopted by the end of this year.

2.4 Research and awareness raising

On the basis of Article 111 of the Social Assistance Act³⁷ (hereinafter referred to as: ZSV), databases of CSDs contain the following data about victims and perpetrators: first and last name, birth data, sex, personal identification number, data on citizenship, data on residence permit for foreigners, residence data, data relating to family relations (number of family members, type of family, relationship between the person concerned), data on the household, data referring to the type of partnership community (marriage or cohabitation), data on status (data on schooling, employment, retirement, and other), data on education, data on medical condition and disability, data on wages and other income and receipts, data on property, data social hardship and problems suffered by individuals, families and population groups, data on exemption from the payment of services, tax identification number, number of current account or another account, data relating to housing and living conditions. Specific databases may also contain information other than personal data, such as, for example, the number of conducted proceedings, provision of first social assistance and other services and data about re-victimisation or repeating of a violent act in previous or current relationship. A sector for informatics has been established at the MDDSZ, which is responsible for planning, creating, maintaining and developing databases. Databases on violence contain the following data: number of cases, analysis by age and type of violence, relationship of the perpetrator to the victim by sex, number of measures, multi-disciplinary teams, analysis of referrals and when violence in the given case started.

In addition to collecting data on the basis of the act regulating social protection, CSDs are also obliged to collect data on the basis of Article 30 of the ZPND. They are responsible for processing personal data and managing databases of persons that pursuant to the Act were dealt with as victims and those dealt with as perpetrators of violence, with the purpose of providing assistance to the victim, to deal with the perpetrator of violence, to create an assistance plan for the victim together with its implementation and monitoring, and for use in scientific, research and statistical purposes.

On 25 November 2021, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Slovenian Presidency of the Council of the European Union organised a High-level Webinar: Building safe digital spaces for women and girls - Click off cyber violence!. The webinar was a great opportunity to address many issues related to cyber violence and harassment which is becoming ever more present in our society and to share mutual experience and best practices on how to build safe digital spaces for all, including women and girls.

The main conclusions were:

- There is a political will to address and combat cyber violence and there is an understanding that a gender perspective in combating cyber violence must be addressed.
- Europe is currently lacking a holistic framework to define and combat violence against women and girls in all its forms.
- The world's most democratic countries are already in decline when it comes to online abuse, however we must not forget that online abuse is gendered, since it affects women and girls disproportionately, but the legal response is oftentimes gender neutral, which makes legal persecution of offenders much more difficult.
- The society has a hard time accepting that cyber violence is as real as physical violence; the research shows that there is no separation between online and offline world when it comes to violence against women. Moreover, often cyber violence leads to physical violence, when not properly addressed.

³⁷ (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia [*Uradni list RS*], Nos. 3/07 – official consolidated version 23/07 – amended, 41/07 – amended, 61/10 – ZSVarPre, 62/10 – ZUPJS, 57/12, 39/16, 52/16 – ZPPreb-1, 15/17 – DZ, 29/17, 54/17, 21/18 – ZNOrg, 31/18 – ZOA-A and 28/19)

- Gender-based violence places large costs on the economy and on the society. The estimate cost of gender-based violence in the EU is 366 billion EUR each year, the cost of cyber violence is estimated at around 89 billion EUR each year.

2.5 Other pertinent developments

In March 2022 a new strategy paper in the field of social protection was adopted - Resolution on the National Social Security Programme 2022-2030 (ReNPSV2-30). The national programme foresees the development of services and programmes in the field of social protection, which also includes and intertwines the area of prevention of violence against women and domestic violence. Among other things, it is envisaged to strengthen the network of crisis centres for children and adolescents (especially for children under the age of 6) and for adult victims of violence, with a particular focus on identifying the needs of individual vulnerable groups (e.g., the elderly, people with disabilities). Strengthening and training of practitioners for these tasks and carrying out new employments. It is also envisaged to achieve a greater level of visibility of the service assisting victims of crime, strengthening the skills of practitioners and better co-operation and liaison with other stakeholders in this area with a view to providing the best possible support to victims of crime. The development of social security programmes (including violence prevention) is also envisaged, with particular attention to the expansion of the network of programmes and the expansion of existing programmes in the light of rapidly changing user needs. The transition of annual public programmes to the public network is also envisaged, allowing stable funding for contractors.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.4 Research and awareness raising

In 2022 we have organised a training for co-ordinators for equal opportunities of women and men at the ministries. The aim was to present methods and key tools for the effective integration of the gender mainstreaming (GM) perspective, taking into account the latest EU findings and the analyses of its agencies.

Content of the training:

1. Interactive introductory part: overview on how the gender perspective is included in the work of individual ministries;
2. Theoretical part: basic concepts and methods and tools for the effective implementation of GM;
3. Practical examples: how to carry out a gender impact assessment;
4. Discussion: feedback and concrete proposals for further training.

In 2022 also a specific training for public officials working at the Ministry of interior and the Police was organised.

Police conducted training for students at the Police College on gender mainstreaming.

The Ministry of the Interior has established a Consultative Body gender Mainstreaming in the Ministry of the Interior and the Police, with the aim of ensuring and implementing the integration of the mainstreaming gender in their work. In the consultative body, members are represented at all levels of the organisation, which enables greater awareness among employees in this area. The members perform their tasks in accordance with the decision of the minister.

6.5 Other pertinent developments.

In 2022, Ministry of Public administration started to prepare a methodology for assessing the effects of regulations on different social areas, which explicitly states in chapter VI entitled "Assessment of social impacts" that the impact on the situation of women and on gender equality should also be taken into account when introducing policies/regulations. This means that, with its adoption, it will make the assessment of the effects of the regulations on gender mandatory or systemic in nature.

7. Main challenges and lessons learned

Challenges and lessons learned stayed the same as years before (see below).

1. Progress on gender equality still too slow

Although significant progress has been made in achieving gender equality and empowerment of women in many areas, particularly in legislation, barriers to substantive gender equality still exist. The changing of social and cultural patterns is a long-term process, and actual gender equality cannot be achieved through short-term measures.

Persistent gender differences require the continuous elimination of barriers to the full participation of women in the labour market and in political, public and economic/financial decision-making. It is also important to combat deeply rooted and newly emerging gender stereotypes that determine women's and men's roles in society and create a gender imbalance in paid and unpaid work. Therefore, we will continue to focus our efforts on creating conditions for a more balanced division of family obligations between women and men.

The existing systemic regulation of equality between women and men still does not ensure actual gender equality in bodies governed by public law. Despite the declared equality between women and men, the figures show that we have not yet achieved a balanced gender representation in specific areas of social life, particularly in decision-making positions in politics, the economy and bodies governed by public law; therefore, in 2019 amendments to the Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act are being drafted. One of the important challenges that remains is also gender balance in economic decision-making, since there are only few women CEOs in the biggest Slovenian companies. To this end, Slovenia is planning to propose legal measures in this area.

2. Backlash against gender equality

One of the challenges gender equality policy will have to deal with in the future is to make its achievements more visible and recognised as a democratic norm. It has been noticed that, irrespective of the development of human rights and standards, gender equality advocates and their initiatives to further improve the status of women and men in our society often encounter negative attitudes. Radical movements (that are trying to re-establish society without dated views on gender equality, human rights and equalities in general) are very successful at promoting the so-called gender theory conspiracy and attacking women's rights, advocates and activists.

3. Limited resources and political commitment

Another challenge that the Equal Opportunities Department in Slovenia is facing, is firstly general lack of financial and human resources for gender equality which could have a negative impact on the realisation of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the future; and secondly additional tasks related to other inequalities and discrimination. Challenges which always remains for the area of gender equality is a political commitment to and lack of understanding of the issue.

Additional tasks related to other inequalities and discrimination have been conferred to the main national gender equality mechanism in Slovenia. As a consequence, lack of financial and human resources for gender equality could have a negative impact on the realisation of gender equality

agenda and the empowerment of women and girls in the future. Challenges which always remains for the area of gender equality is a political commitment to the agenda.

For more efficient implementation of gender equality policy and in order to ensure greater autonomy and more efficient functioning of the national mechanism for gender equality, the competent authority should be strengthened and given a position of influence in the government's hierarchy and/or its organisational structure To ensure that the principle of gender equality is followed by all ministries and state institutions, the status of co-ordinators within the ministries should be strengthen and gender budgeting should be applied at different levels.

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In relation with the participatory process, promoted by the Ministry of Equality and the Institute of Women, to reform Constitutional Act 2/2010 on Sexual and Reproductive Health and the Voluntary Interruption of Pregnancy, the Council of Ministers approved to send the draft reform bill to the Parliament, on 30 August. <p>Regarding this subject matter, Constitutional Law 4/2022, of April 12, modifies the Penal Code in order to penalise harassment to women who attend clinics for the voluntary interruption of pregnancy³⁸.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law 13/2022 of 7 July, on Audio-visual Communication.³⁹ Reference must be made to article 6 of this Law that deals with gender equality and women’s image, aiming to ensure that audio-visual communication conveys an equal and non-discriminatory image of women and men and does not directly or indirectly favour discrimination based on sex, inequality of women or incite sexual or gender violence. The law also promotes the production of audio-visual works directed or produced by women, also promoting the training, attraction and retention of female talent in this sector. Moreover, in independent production, providers of linear and on-demand television audio-visual communication services must allocate 30% to works directed or created exclusively by women. Law 15/2022, of 12 July, comprehensive for equal treatment and non-discrimination⁴⁰. It is important to highlight the definition and regulation of multiple and intersectional discrimination and of positive action measures that take into account this specific type of discrimination, due to their importance for the development of equality policies aimed at women, who are especially vulnerable to this type of discrimination. Royal Decrees to regulate the curriculum for Early Childhood Education, Primary Education, Compulsory Secondary Education and Baccalaureate (RD 95/2022,⁴¹ RD 157/2022,⁴² RD 217/2022,⁴³ and RD 244/2022) have been approved. Among their objectives is the promotion of effective equality between men and women. All areas of knowledge at the different educational levels, incorporate contents on comprehensive sexuality education and education for citizenship (gender stereotypes and sexism). Royal Decree 634/2022⁴⁵, 26 July. It regulates the direct grant from the Ministry of Equality to various entities for the social and labour insertion of women and girls who are victims of trafficking, sexual exploitation and women in contexts of prostitution, within the framework of the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Plan. Royal Decree-Law 16/2022, of 6 September, for the improvement of the working conditions and Social Security of workers in domestic service⁴⁶. Its objective is to make the working and Social Security conditions of domestic workers equal to the rest of employed persons. Law 17/2022, 5 September, modifies Law 14/2011, on Science, Technology and Innovation.⁴⁷ The gender perspective is reinforced throughout the regulatory text and is given legal certainty as it is included in articles 4bis and 4ter. Reference should be made to articles 21 and 22, where temporary contracts (predoc. and postdoc) are suspended/extended for any situation related to care, including leaves of absence and reduction in working hours.

³⁸ <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/lo/2022/04/12/4>

³⁹ <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-11311>

⁴⁰ <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-11589>

⁴¹ <https://www.boe.es/buscar/doc.php?id=BOE-A-2022-1654>

⁴² <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-3296>

⁴³ <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-4975>

⁴⁴ <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-5521>

⁴⁵ https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2022-12507#:~:text=A%2D2022%2D12507-

⁴⁶ <https://boe.es/boe/dias/2022/09/08/pdfs/BOE-A-2022-14680.pdf>

⁴⁷ https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2022-14581

- **Royal Decree 636/2022, of 26 July, which regulates the Social Inclusion Seal**⁴⁸. The actions that enable the Seal to be awarded must integrate, among others the principle of equality between women and men, equal opportunities for all people, without discrimination on grounds of sex.
- The **Supreme Court's Judgment 2944/2022 of 14 July 2022** is worth highlighting. It considers the requirement for women to have a minimum height of 1,60 metres in order to be admitted to the selective tests for entry into the National Police Corps, an indirect discrimination against women with respect to men, who are required to have a less demanding minimum height (1.65 metres), since the percentage of women (25%) is much higher than that of men (3%) who do not reach the required height.

1.2 Policy changes

The Women's Institute in collaboration with the Labour Ministry and social partners has developed the tools and guides established in the new legislation approved in 2020 on gender equality plans and gender pay transparency: Pay record tool, Jobs assessment tool and remuneration audit guide with a gender perspective, available at: <https://www.igualdadempresa.es/asesoramiento/herramientas-igualdad/home.htm>.

In addition, it has published a call for grants (500.000 €) addressed at trade unions to finance training, support and specialised advice for the negotiation, preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of equality plans.

<https://www.inmujeres.gob.es/servRecursos/convocatorias/2022/SubvenEmpleo2022.htm>

It has also continued developing the [Innovatia 8.3 Programme](#), already mentioned in the previous report, that has been selected as national winner in the 2022 edition of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards, in Category 6 - Responsible and Inclusive Entrepreneurship-. In addition, due to the success of [the School for Women Entrepreneurs "Juana Millán"](#), its budget has been increased and its development has expanded.

In the justice sector, there are current ongoing initiatives aimed at fostering equality and work-life balance. The so-called [Justice 2030 Plan](#) includes, among its different measures, the elaboration and subsequent approval of a specific equality plan tailored to the civil servants of the Administration of Justice. Another plan is on its way to promote rules that facilitate work-life balance such as the creation of a framework for remote work.

1.3 Institutional changes.

The Advisory Board for Caregiving established in 2021 by the Ministry of Equality has continued working on its two main goals: preparing a Base Document that could inspire a future State Care System and advising on priority public policies and programmes in progress. Three plenary sessions have taken place and several working groups have been established.

1.4 Research and awareness raising

- The Institute of Women is publishing **monthly videos** highlighting inequalities between men and women and gender gaps in different areas. The aim of it is to raise awareness through statistical data on inequality.⁴⁹
- **Campaign on masculinities aimed at men**⁵⁰ showing the evolution of Spanish society over the last 40 years and encouraging men to continue living their masculinity in a more committed, open and healthy way. The campaign can be seen on the television, radio, press, digital and social networks.
- The Institute of Women supports a [Research Chair for democratic values and gender](#), in collaboration with the Complutense University of Madrid, aimed at carrying out analyses, research, teaching and academic activities regarding democratic values and gender, which has

⁴⁸ <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/rd/2022/07/26/636>

⁴⁹ <https://www.inmujeres.gob.es/MujerCifras/Infografia/InfografiaMeses.htm>

⁵⁰

https://www.igualdad.gob.es/comunicacion/notasprensa/Documents/NdeP/NdeP_Campa%C3%B1aEHB_080922.pdf <https://mab.to/BvHr3HowC>

been organizing different workshops and seminars throughout Spain.⁵¹ Mention must also be made to a video carried out on sexism.⁵²

- The Women's Institute published the II Edition of the Celia Amorós Prize for Feminist Essay (July 2022). The aim of the call is to strengthen research related to feminist studies from any academic discipline. The prize pool has been increased from 5,000 to 20,000 euros.
- To raise awareness and commemorate special dates for gender equality, a seminar on **“Building equality from the sticky floors”**, took place on the equal pay day (22 March). On the International Domestic Workers Day (March 30), the Women's Institute held a meeting with more than 50 domestic workers from different associations: **“Essential Workers. Sustaining life with rights”**⁵³. Its aim was to give visibility, voice, support and encouragement to the association of domestic workers, being domestic work a highly feminised sector that does not always enjoy the same labour rights and social protection as the majority of workers.
- An institutional event commemorating the Global Day of Action for Access to Safe and Legal Abortion (September 28th⁵⁴) was held by The Women's Institute. The Minister of Equality and feminist representatives of the struggle for access to free abortion, participated in this event.
- On care issues, the seminar **“The right to care from a feminist perspective”**⁵⁵, carried out in collaboration with the Spanish Menéndez Pelayo International University, took place on September 5-7.
- Two **guides aimed at displaced Ukrainian women** have been published. The main purpose is for Ukrainian women to know their labour rights in Spain and to identify and know how to act in case of sexual harassment or harassment based on sex. [Guia_derechos_laborales_mujeres_ucranianas_castellano.pdf](#) (igualdadenaempresa.es); [Guia_acoso_sexual_trabajo_castellano.pdf](#) (igualdadenaempresa.es).
- As far as research goes, mention can be made to the **study on “Young women and bullying in social networks”**⁵⁶ (March, 2022), published by the Institute for Women.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

- The **Observatory of Women's Image** receives and analyses complaints arising from sexist advertisements that appear in any media. On this basis, companies are required to modify or withdraw their campaigns, and the Women's Institute advises them to facilitate the removal of discriminatory messages. From the first of January 2022 to the end of September 2022 the Observatory received 338 complaints. Almost half of them (122), were received between June and August regarding the communication and promotion of “girls' bikinis”. These complaints focused on the idea of the early sexualisation of girls through advertising images. The Institute of Women has sent [recommendations](#)⁵⁷ and requests to the entities subject to these complaints.
- In the **Virtual School of Equality (www.escolavirtualigualdad.es)**, developed by the Institute of Women, which offers online gender equality training aimed at the population as a whole and at professionals of different fields, 18,936 people have participated (14,829 women and 4,107 men), from November 2021 to 4 September 2022, the date the 11th edition ended.

⁵¹ <https://www.ucm.es/catedra/valoresdemocraticosygenero/>

⁵² [SEXISMO/ Cátedra Extraordinaria de Valores Democráticos y Género - YouTube](#)

⁵³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wowRBLieoal>

⁵⁴ <https://www.inmujeres.gob.es/actualidad/noticias/2022/SEPTIEMBRE/actoderechoaborto.htm>

⁵⁵ http://www.uimp.es/agenda-link.html?id_actividad=654N&anyaca=2022-23

⁵⁶ https://www.inmujeres.gob.es/areasTematicas/AreaEstudiosInvestigacion/docs/Estudios/Mujeres_jovenes_y_acoso_en_redes_sociales.pdf

⁵⁷ <https://www.inmujeres.gob.es/actualidad/noticias/2022/JUNIO/publibikininas.htm>

- In the **education field**, the Institute of Women supports the organisation of the MOOC (massive open online course) “Educate in Equality”, addressed mainly to teachers. Six editions have been developed; the last one in June 2022.
- The first edition of the [Cultural Agenda: The Open House](#)⁵⁸ of the Women’s Institute was launched on 25 May 2022, coinciding with the official inauguration of its new headquarters, larger and more easily accessible from any part of the city. It will also hold the Women’s Library, a donation, which includes more than 30.000 books. The cultural agenda includes cultural activities, workshops, conferences and exhibits, from July to November 2022, both in Madrid and in other Spanish regions.
- The Women’s Institute also promoted women in films, theatre and other disciplines and supported special sections dedicated to women in the [Almagro International Classical Theatre Festival](#),⁵⁹ in the 15th edition of the Section “Affirming Women’s Rights” within the framework of the 24th edition of the **Malaga Film Festival**, in the [Women Create Festival](#)⁶⁰ and the [Cinema Women Festival](#)⁶¹.
- Mention should also be made to the [itinerant exhibits](#)⁶² of the Institute that travel all around the country to show the special role that women have played in sports, politics, science, culture and society in general.
- In the field of sports, the **LILI ALVAREZ Awards** go to the best journalistic works that contribute to the dissemination of equality between women and men in sports and that make women’s sport more visible in Spain.
- In the **field of Justice**, the General Council of the Judiciary, through its initial and periodic training plan, guarantees that judges receive training regarding equality between women and men and violence against women, and carries out specific training such as judging with a gender perspective. The [Justice 2030 Plan](#), already mentioned, includes an inclusive language project.
- The National Institute of Toxicology and Forensic Sciences, in collaboration with the Forensic Medical Council, has drawn up the Forensic Medical Action Protocol in the face of Sexual Violence in 2021, and has developed a kit for taking DNA samples from victims of sexual violence.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

- **Constitutional Law 10/2022, of 6 September, on the comprehensive guarantee of sexual freedom**⁶³, also known as the law of “only yes is yes”, was approved.
- The **Royal Decree-Law 6/2022 on urgent measures related to tackle the social and economic consequences of the War in Ukraine**⁶⁴ foresees, among other initiatives, a new administrative accreditation system for victims of sex trafficking or sexual exploitation (Article 47).

⁵⁸ : <https://www.inmujeres.gob.es/areasTematicas/cultura/AgendaCultural/home.htm>

⁵⁹ <https://www.festivaldealmagro.com/en/>

⁶⁰ <https://ellascrean.com/en/>

⁶¹ <https://www.festivalcinepormujeres.com/>

⁶² <https://www.inmujeres.gob.es/servRecursos/exposiciones/consultaExpo/home.htm>

⁶³ [BOE.es - BOE-A-2022-14630 Ley Orgánica 10/2022, de 6 de septiembre, de garantía integral de la libertad sexual.](https://www.boe.es/BOE-A-2022-14630)

⁶⁴ <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-4972>

2.2 Policy changes

- Operational Plan against Sex Trafficking: officially presented on 20 September 2022.
- The State Strategy to fight against sexist violence is currently being elaborated. It includes all forms of violence against women. Its final approval is expected by the end of 2022.

2.3 Institutional changes

GBV public policies are being reinforced:

- The 016 call centre now gives service also in Ukrainian ([Royal Decree-Law 6/2022 on urgent measures related to tackle the social and economic consequences of the War in Ukraine](#))
- Atenpro service (mobile phone for GBV victims which includes permanent follow up and advice from a specialised call centre: 32,676,000€ (2021-2023)
- A state-wide network of 52 new Sexual violence 24H crisis centres is being put in place: 66,000,000€ (2021-2023).
- Call for proposals for NGOs working on Sex Trafficking: Public call for proposals that the Government Delegation against gender-based violence launches every year. Increased from 4M€ to 6M€ in 2021 and 2022.
- New Call for proposals for GBV awareness raising actions: 6.5M€.
- Legal Aid for Spanish Women victims of GBV in foreign countries: 500,000 € from the budget of the Ministry of Equality that will be managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through Embassies and Consulates abroad.
- [Agreement between the Government delegation against gender-based violence and the Centre for Judiciary Studies in order to put in place a training programme on GBV](#) (published on 8 December 2021⁶⁵).

2.4 Research and awareness raising

- In addition to the statistics of intimate partner femicides, collected since 2003, data on other forms of femicide is being collected since January 2022 in order to comply with the Istanbul Convention and GREVIO recommendations. Data is being collected but it has not been released yet.
- [International Comparative Study on public policies regarding new masculinities](#) (December 2021):
https://violenciagenero.igualdad.gob.es/violenciaEnCifras/estudios/investigaciones/2021/estudios/comparativa_politicas_masculinidades_.htm
- [Study on the impact of the COVID pandemic on GBV in Spain](#) (2022):
https://violenciagenero.igualdad.gob.es/violenciaEnCifras/estudios/investigaciones/2022/estudios/impacto_covid19.htm
- [Study on gender-based political violence in Spain](#) (2022):
https://violenciagenero.igualdad.gob.es/violenciaEnCifras/estudios/investigaciones/2022/estudios/violencia_politica.htm
- New Study on Sex trafficking aimed at estimating the number of women and girls who are victims of Sex Trafficking: currently under elaboration.
- Awareness raising actions for the prevention and detection of GBV and Sex trafficking among Ukrainian women and girls who entered Spain due to the Ukrainian crises (**A guide on GBV rights for displaced women**, a new space in website, QR code with all the new information):

⁶⁵ https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2021-20293

<https://violenciagenero.igualdad.gob.es/informacionUtil/extranjeras/ucrania/vgeneroGeneral.htm>

- Awareness raising campaign against GBV during the summer of 2022: “Purple spot” <https://www.igualdad.gob.es/comunicacion/notasprensa/Paginas/igualdad-lanza-la-campana-querernos-vivas-libres.aspx>
- Lottery coupon to raise awareness against Sex trafficking: <https://www.once.es/noticias/el-cupon-de-la-once-difunde-la-ley-integral-contra-la-trata>

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

- Forthcoming legislative initiatives included in the above-mentioned [Justice 2030 Plan](#) seek to improve women’s access to justice. In particular, the Draft Organic Law for the Organisational Efficiency of the Public Justice Service, that will amend the Organic Law 6/1985 of the Judiciary, aims at transforming the structure of the judiciary in order to facilitate access to justice, bringing public justice services closer to citizens regardless of where they live. Special attention is given to women victims of violence.

This Plan improves women's access to justice by guaranteeing its availability throughout the territory, including rural areas, its accessibility to women with disabilities, and using information and communication technologies such as judicial proceedings by videoconference.

- [Royal Decree 586/2022, of 19 July](#),⁶⁶ amends the Regulation on free legal aid, establishing among the requirements to be able to provide legal assistance as well as for law professionals who provide free legal assistance services to victims of gender violence and human trafficking that they cannot have a criminal record for attacks against life, physical integrity, freedom, moral integrity, sexual integrity or privacy in the field of violence against women, unless they have been cancelled.

3.2 Policy changes

- The adoption of Organic Law 5/2018, on the reform of the Organic Law of the Judiciary entailed the inclusion of measures aimed at deepening gender equality of judges and prosecutors. In this sense, the **initial training plans for judges and prosecutors for 2022-2023** include modules on the application of the principle of equality between women and men and gender violence, and specific training on the CEDAW, on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), as well on other gender equality issues such as gender mainstreaming, inclusive language, recent case-law of the Supreme Court on gender violence, gender-based cybercrime, sexual violent crimes.
- In addition to these activities, there are **guides** on recommendations, good practices or criteria for judicial action, which seek to improve and homogenise the judicial response in matters that are considered strategic from the point of view of equality between women and men. Their aim is to improve the judicial response in specific matters, introducing the gender and human rights perspective.

3.5 Other pertinent developments.

The ONCE Social Group and the Official College of Psychology of Madrid have issued [two guides](#) to help women with visual impairment or deaf blindness as well as for professionals working in this field. http://www.infocoonline.es/pdf/guia_sordoceguera_judiciales.pdf

⁶⁶ https://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2022-14682

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.3 Institutional changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Institute has continued developing the programme “Rural Woman Challenge” (<i>Desafío Mujer Rural</i>) to support women in rural areas, as well as with the National Association of Women Fisheries (ANMUPESCA).• The Institute has also continued developing the “Talentia 360. Women in decision-making” programme for the professional promotion of women, to empower women for leadership, making female talent visible and increasing the number of women in positions of responsibility, both in the business sector and in the State Security Forces.
4.4 Research and awareness raising
The Institute is carrying out workshops on unconscious gender biases aimed at managers and human resources of collaborating entities, to help participants identify these biases and analyse their influence and their impact in the selection, management and direction of workers and teams. These workshops have also been provided to State Security Forces.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Regulation of the International Protection Reception System⁶⁷ passed in March 2022. Among other important principles, the reception system shall ensure a human rights, gender and intersectionality approach in all programmes, measures and actions carried out, that include the recognition of discrimination and violence that specifically affects women and the prevention of and attention to violations of the human rights of LGBTBI+ persons and of persons based on their national or ethnic origin.• The Instruction of the Secretary of State for Migrations 2/2021, on temporary residence and work authorisation for exceptional circumstances, for foreign women victims of gender violence, passed in November 2021.⁶⁸ It establishes that foreign women victims of gender-based violence, who meet the established requirements, can have access to this authorisation, regardless of their administrative situation in Spain.• The Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration has co-ordinated the attention and reception of displaced people from Ukraine. More than 24,000 emergency reception places have been created and 4 Reception, Care and Referral Centres (CREADE) located in Madrid, Barcelona, Malaga and Alicante. Among other measures, a procedure for the prevention, detection, care and referral of possible victims of human trafficking in CREADE has been implemented, in order to establish guidelines for action when there are suspicions that a person may be the subject to a situation of human trafficking.• The implementation of the protocol for the detection and action against possible cases of trafficking in human beings for the purpose of sexual exploitation (which was approved in 2015) has been reinforced through different actions in the Humanitarian Care Programme.• An Information Provision Protocol, in order to harmonise the information on the essential aspects of reception, access to international protection, and the administrative situation, as well as other issues, provided to the beneficiaries in the reception devices of the Humanitarian Care Programme was approved in November 2021.

⁶⁷ <https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2022-4978>).

⁶⁸ https://extranjeros.inclusion.gob.es/ficheros/normativa/nacional/instrucciones_sgje/documentos/2021/21124_Inst_ruccion_violenciadegenero.pdf

5.3 Institutional changes

- Regarding the specific accommodation places for victims of gender violence and victims of human trafficking, during the last year, **more than 100 specialised places have been financed in the International Protection Reception System.**
- The gender sensitive approach is included in every aspect in the Humanitarian Care Programme, and especially in the design and characteristics of the reception and humanitarian care resources. The number and the quality of these resources has been increased in recent months. The humanitarian care programme has specific places for victims of trafficking. As a matter of fact, there are 210 places managed by four different entities. These places are based in: Seville, Cádiz, Córdoba and Almería in Andalusia; Teruel, in Aragón; Las Palmas, in the Canary Islands; and Bilbao, in the Basque Country, all for women, both alone and as a part of a family unit.
- The **assisted voluntary return and reintegration** (AVRR) programmes provide a dignified return and foster the sustainable reintegration of migrants who are unable or unwilling to remain in host countries and wish to return voluntarily to their countries of origin. This programme includes an increasing gender-based approach. Gender vulnerabilities are one of the main aspects to be provided with urgent access to the programme. Moreover, the programme includes specific measures for trafficking in human beings' victims where an urgent procedure for voluntary return will be implemented. This gender approach has been reinforced within the last months.
- There are several **hotlines available for information specially featured for victims of trafficking of human beings and women at risk or in vulnerable conditions.** In the present year, hotlines information services have been reinforced.

5.4 Research and awareness raising.

- To promote the **Protocol for action against violence to women in the International Protection Reception System**, which was approved in July 2021, **a joint project is being carried out with the UNHCR**, with the following contents: Creation of a working group that meets once a month (to date, 5 sessions have been held); Visits to centers and interviews have been carried out; Discussion groups have been formed; Several materials and a data collection tool are being prepared; Internal protocols and action plans; training.
- In the Humanitarian Care Programme and in order to prevent gender discrimination as well as trafficking in human beings, several trainings programmes for staff, NGOs members, and providers have been included.

5.5 Other pertinent developments

The Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)17 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on protecting the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls, has been translated into Spanish and is available in the Council of Europe as well as in the Institute of Women's webpage.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.2 Policy changes

6.3 Institutional changes

6.4 Research and awareness raising

- The **III Strategic Plan for the Effective Equality of Women and Men 2022-2025**, was approved by the Council of Ministers on March 8, 2022. It sets out the policy agenda for gender equality for the next four years (2022-2025).

The Plan is structured around four main lines of action: 1. Good Governance, to move towards a more inclusive and democratic model of government, aiming to ensure that all public policies are gender-sensitive; 2. Economy for life and the fair distribution of wealth, against the feminisation of poverty and precariousness, focuses specifically on the deepest gaps and concentrates 91% of the plan's financial resources on measures for decent employment and the reduction of wage and pension gaps, as well as joint responsibility for care; 3. Lives for women free from male violence, with the aim of strengthening institutional co-ordination and response systems for early detection and comprehensive care for victims of violence by a partner or former partner, sexual violence, sexual exploitation and trafficking; 4. To ensure all women can effectively exercise their rights in all areas of life, including measures to respond to the needs of women who suffer from multiple or intersectional discrimination.

As stated in the Plan, in relation with the first line of action (Good Governance), in order to systematically incorporate the gender perspective, it is necessary to further strengthen training on equality issues for the personnel of the General State Administration, as well to strengthen and consolidate co-ordination and collaboration within and among Ministries, and of the different institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming, such as the equality units of Ministries and the Interministerial Equality Commission, proposing different measures to that end.

- Within the framework of the collaboration agreement between the Women's Institute and the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP) (July 2022), the **online “Municipal School for Equality”** for the implementation of equality plans at a local level to train, advice and support the incorporation of the gender perspective in local policies, both for technical and political staff in charge of municipal management, was presented on October 6, 2022. A Guide on Good Practices for the incorporation of the gender perspective at a local level, was also presented.

Sweden

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.1 Legislative changes.

The government decided in 2018 to review what measures are needed to ensure compliance with the provisions on active measures in the Discrimination Act including the supervisory responsibility over the Discrimination Act when it comes to activities according to the Schools Act.

The inquiry on certain issues in the Discrimination Act (2021:94) assessed that the protection of employees against harassment and sexual harassment from third parties needs to be strengthened. The inquiry therefore proposed that the Discrimination Act should be clarified so that it is clear that employers must also work actively against harassment and sexual harassment from third parties.

The specific provision on hate speech (agitation against a population group) does not cover sexist speech. However, the Swedish Criminal Code (1962:700) contains other provisions that may be applied to hateful speech including when sexist in nature. There is for instance a Chapter on defamation that includes a provision on insulting behaviour (Chapter 5 Section 3), which applies to a person who directs accusation, a derogatory statement or humiliating conduct at another person is, if the act is liable to violate the other person's self-esteem or dignity.

It should also be mentioned that a committee of inquiry is tasked to consider whether crimes where a motive has been that the victim is of a certain gender or has a certain gender identity should be seen as an aggravating circumstance explicitly mentioned in the Swedish Criminal Code.

1.2 Policy changes

The government has taken a series of measures aimed at countering sexual harassment and sexual violence. For example, in the joint regulatory letter for 2018, state universities and colleges were tasked with making visible their prevention and promotion work to counter sexual harassment. The University and Higher Education Council (UHR) was also tasked with collectively making visible the work of higher education institutions to prevent sexual harassment and their work when they become aware of suspected sexual harassment.

With regard to working life, the government tasked the Discrimination Ombudsman and the Work Environment Agency to produce information and implement training efforts for employers to strengthen the prevention and skills-enhancing work against sexual harassment.

A Commission for gender equal lifetime earnings has been tasked with submitting proposals aimed at increasing economic equality between women and men in the long term. The commission has submitted proposals for measures that contribute to promoting equal wages, equal living incomes, an equal distribution of public support measures to women and men and equal workplaces. The assignment was finally reported on February 7, 2022 "Reduce the gap - Measures for equal lifetime incomes". An interim report was submitted on January 25, 2021.

Two Commission proposals which have been commissioned by the previous government are:

1) Follow-up of how the gender equality perspective has been incorporated into annual reports and budget documents

The Swedish Financial Supervisory Authority will follow up authorities' compliance with the regulation on annual reports and budget documents from an equality perspective. The assignment includes reviewing annual reports and budget documents for 2021 and 2022 from a selection of the authorities that are part of the government's development programme "Gender mainstreaming in

government agencies". The assignment will be reported to the Government Office no later than June 15, 2023.

2) Assignment to make gender equality analyses of salary income and other income

The Mediation Institute has a government mandate to carry out gender equality analyses of salary income and other income that affects individuals' disposable income over their lifetime. In a first step, the mediation institute must carry out a gender equality analysis of salary income and other income. The authority will also submit proposals on how gender equality analyses of wage income and other income can be carried out regularly. In addition to salary income, the assignment includes an analysis of how returns from capital, business income/business income and transfers are distributed between women and men. The result should compare incomes between groups and sectors and highlight how income differences between women and men can look for different groups in society.

This includes analysing:

- development over time
- how income differences look in different parts of the labour market
- how the income gap looks for different groups in the population (for example by age, region of birth, length of stay in Sweden of those born abroad).

The former Government also launched during the Spring 2022 a reform for Flexibility, Adaptability and Security in the labour market. This reform will have substantial positive impact on both gender equality and for the transition to a green economy. The reform implies that we will legislate on the right to full-time work. This means that full-time work will become the norm and part-time work the exception. This is of course especially important to women, as some 26 percent of women in Sweden today work part-time and the most common reason for this is that they cannot get a full-time employment.

The reform package will also address the issue of life-long learning. Everyone in Sweden who has worked for more than eight years will be given the opportunity to study for up to one year with financing providing at least 80 per cent of their previous income up to a maximum amount.

In Sweden foreign-born women have a lower employment rate than domestic-born women, which also contributes to economic inequality. Therefore, the Government intends to work to increase foreign-born women's opportunities to enter the labour market. It is an important step towards both reduced segregation and giving all women and men the same opportunities and conditions in terms of paid work, which leads to greater economic equality. An investigation is currently underway that will propose improved labour market establishment for foreign-born women. Furthermore, the Equality Agency, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, the Swedish Migration Agency, the National Board of Health and Welfare and the County Administrative Board Västernorrland have been tasked with drawing up a joint agency plan to increase the entry of foreign-born women into the labour market.

1.3 Institutional changes

Harassment and sexual harassment is discrimination and prohibited in several areas of society. There are special requirements for employers or educational providers to act when someone is exposed in the workplace, school or university. Employers and training providers must also work preventively.

If you are subjected to harassment or sexual harassment in an activity covered by the law, you can make a report to the Equality Ombudsman.

Employers and training providers must implement active measures to prevent all forms of discrimination, for example harassment and sexual harassment. The work must be carried out

continuously in four stages: investigate, analyse, remedy and follow up. This could, for example, involve reviewing conversational climate and jargon.

The Discrimination Act does not regulate all areas of society, nor what happens between private individuals when it comes to, for example, how neighbours or relatives treat each other. The content of advertising, TV, radio, social media and newspapers are not covered by the Discrimination Act. There are, however, other laws and regulations that set limits for, for example, actions between private individuals and for what may be written and said in advertising and the media.

1.4 Research and awareness-raising

Statistics Sweden (SCB) compiles statistics in relation to the working environment which covers physical and psychosocial work environment conditions and how they have changed over time. The result is reported by profession, industry, socio-economic division, age and gender. The survey is a supplementary survey to the Labour Force Surveys (AKU).

Both agencies, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) and Statistics Sweden (SCB) publishes reports with sex-disaggregated statistics. The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention annually produce the Swedish Crime Survey (SCS), a survey on, inter alia, victimisation of assault, sexual offences, threats, harassment and online harassment among the Swedish population (16-84 years). SCS-data is sex- and age-disaggregated but the survey questions relating to sexual offences and harassment do not specify its manifestations (e.g. it does not differentiate between sexual offences as physical incidents or oral or written sexually offensive comments, and does not specify whether harassments were of sexual nature). Every two years The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) also produce the Politician's Safety Survey (PTU), which measures the extent and consequences of harassment, threats and violence experienced by elected representatives who are exposed in their capacity as elected representatives. The PTU-data is sex-disaggregated, and respondents are asked to respond to questions concerning self-reported victimisation during the previous year, including whether there was any verbal, written or physical attack of sexual nature in conjunction with the incidents.

Statistics Sweden publishes its report 'Women and men in Sweden - facts and figures' every two years. All statistics in the reports are sex disaggregated. The reports present the results from analysis and surveys about men and women in several different areas, for example unpaid home and care work as well as men's violence against women. Furthermore, in 2020 Statistics Sweden was commissioned to carry out a pilot study with the aim of testing a new approach for a time-use survey among women and men that has been conducted every ten years since 1990. The statistics from the survey provide a picture of people's everyday lives and show how the population divides their time into various activities, such as leisure and homework activities. The statistics show differences in women's and men's time use, but also how time use varies in the different phases of life.

1.5 Other pertinent developments.

The Swedish Crime Victim Authority's campaign against online hate speech, including sexist hate speech. The Government commissioned the agency in 2021 to implement the campaign. The campaign is mainly channelled online, but signs have also physically been placed outdoors and on public transport. The campaign directs you to a website with information regarding what is criminal, how to report and what support is available. One of the main points which is raised for awareness as well as causes for crime is sexual harassment which includes sexist behaviour or sexist hate speech towards another individual.

In 2019 the Government commissioned the Equality Ombudsman to implement awareness-raising initiatives to raise the knowledge about measures and offensive special treatment, including work against sexual harassment. The government also commissioned the Swedish Gender Equality Agency to collect and spread knowledge about sexual harassment, with a particular focus on the situation

of children and young people. The agency has gathered information and links to guidelines, manuals, checklists and advice aimed at professionals, guardians, leaders within associations or anyone who has a role in responding to the vulnerable and preventing sexual harassment and abuse from occurring on its webpage. The types of guidelines, manuals and checklist include:

- Guidelines, manuals and checklists on children and young people's rights and that are aimed at children and young people themselves.
- Guidelines, manuals, and checklists regarding where to find support which are aimed at adults.
- Guidelines, manuals and checklists for trade unions, authorities, and employers' organisations. The aim is to support the work against sexual harassment at work and gives information about the Discrimination Act in relation to working life.
- Guidelines, manuals and checklists for preschools, schools, universities, and colleges as well as many other types of education, both municipal and private. The aim is to spread information about the School Act and the curriculum, as well as in the Discrimination Act and the Work Environment Act.

An example from the civil society includes The Friends foundation which examines safety of schools around the country every year. The report also provides information about groups of children and young people who are particularly vulnerable, and who we particularly need to strengthen. The most common forms of harassment are, among other things, linked to ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability. <https://friends.se/report/friendsrapporten-2022/>

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

The government has implemented and announced several initiatives to strengthen criminal law protection against men's violence against women.

On 1 January 2022, the minimum penalty for gross violation of a woman's integrity and gross violation of integrity was increased from nine months to imprisonment for one year (and at most six years). Moreover, the scale of penalties for breaches of non-contact orders was amended from a fine or imprisonment for at most one year to imprisonment for (at least 14 days and) at most one year. The former rule of freedom from responsibility was replaced with a provision to the effect that in minor cases the penalty is a fine.

In February 2022, the Swedish government appointed a committee of inquiry to review the protection under criminal law for children aged 15–17 against sexual violations, especially in relation to purchases of sexual acts, and review whether the legislative text should clarify that certain child pornography crimes are documented assaults on children by amending the legal classification. The inquiry will also consider whether it should be seen as an aggravating circumstance when a motive for a crime is that the victim is of a certain gender or has a certain gender identity (dir. 2022:7).

On 1 June 2022 the criminal offence honour-based oppression entered into force. The criminal offence includes a person who commits certain criminal acts against a person and a motive was to preserve or restore the honour of a person or of an immediate or wider family or some other similar group. The penalty for the offence is imprisonment for at least one year and at most six years.

2.2 Policy changes

Within Sweden's 'National strategy for combating and preventing men's violence against women and honour-related violence and repression', the government adopted a national violence prevention programme in June 2022. This programme includes policies and plans for several areas and agencies to combat sexism and stereotypical, sexist norms. The programme also explicitly

recognises the importance of challenging the views of power and masculinity early to prevent stereotypical perceptions of masculinity and femininity which increase the tendency for violence.

A regulation has been introduced in the Swedish Social Services Act stipulating that social welfare committees must work to help people who have subjected close relatives to violence or other abuses to change their behaviour. The legislative changes to the laws entered into force on 1 August 2021.

A regulation on state grants to women's and girls' shelters and certain other non-profit organizations was introduced in September 2021. The government has decided to make the state grants permanent.

The government will draw up a new action programme for 2024-2026.

2.3 Institutional changes

A permanent national and cross-sectoral competence centre against violence and oppression in the name of so-called honour was established in 2022. The centre will support and contribute to strategic, preventive and knowledge-based work against honour-related violence and oppression at national, regional and local level. Among other things, the centre will support municipalities and regions in their work to introduce, monitor and evaluate working methods and methods for the support of the vulnerable. The centre will also regularly investigate the extent of honour-related violence and oppression in Sweden and the development of society's efforts in the area. An additional task is to gather and disseminate knowledge about honour-related violence and oppression based on research and proven experience.

2.4 Research and awareness-raising

The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brottsförebyggande rådet, or Brå for short) has been instructed by the government to study what measures can be taken in society to combat intimate partner violence among young people. Brå was also instructed to describe the causal mechanisms behind such violence, identify preventive and supportive measures and highlight gaps in the knowledge on the basis of Swedish and international research (Brå 2021:15). Brå identified a number of areas in which society's initiatives and measures can be strengthened in order to improve the work to combat intimate partner violence among young people. For example, improve the likelihood of detection through routine questions by health care, pupil and student health and child and youth psychiatry. Brå concludes that relevant societal actors lack support for the target group and presents several strategic measures to strengthen society's capacity. Among other things, Brå proposes measures and efforts for LGBTQI people and vulnerable groups, and that the justice system's work against intimate partner violence among young couple-related can be strengthened.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.1 Legislative changes

A special inquiry has been commissioned to consider whether there is a need for stronger protection under criminal law for persons exercising their freedom of expression, in particular within journalism. The inquiry proposes a new special ground for more severe penalties for offences committed against journalists. According to the proposed provision the courts, as aggravating circumstances when assessing penalty value, in addition to what applies for each specific type of offence, should give particular consideration to whether the offence was committed against a person on grounds of them or a family member having engaged in a news service or other journalism. The inquiry proposes that the provision should enter into force in July 2023.

4.5 Other pertinent developments

The government has decided on several measures to combat threat and hatred against women online.

Every two years The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention produces the Politician's Safety Survey (PTU), which measures the extent and consequences of harassment, threats and violence experienced by elected representatives who are exposed in their capacity as elected representatives. The PTU-data is sex-disaggregated, and respondents are asked to respond to questions concerning self-reported victimisation during the previous year, including for example whether there was any verbal, written or physical attack of sexual nature in conjunction with the incidents.

The Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority has been commissioned to launch an information campaign about online-hate in 2021-2022. The campaign was targeted at persons who are victims of online-hate due to racism, gender-based hatred, sexism and similar forms of hostility. The campaign also included to spread information about the website tysnainte.se, which contains information about online-hate and harassment.

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) has received funding in order to support and develop the systematic work of municipalities and county councils to combat and prevent hatred against elected representatives in 2022. The task includes to increase knowledge about differences in exposure between women and men elected representatives in municipalities and regions and to contribute to the development of the municipalities' and regions' work to prevent and deal with verbal, written or physical attacks of a sexual nature, which more often are directed towards women than men.

Linnaeus University is assignment to identify, develop and implement skills and capacity development efforts aimed at journalists and newsrooms to prevent and manage exposure to threats and hatred. The assignment is proposed to focus on strengthening newsrooms' knowledge of differences in the forms of threats and hatred directed at female and male journalists, and to especially strengthen newsrooms' ability to deal with attacks and harassment of a sexual nature.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

No legislative or policy changes. The recent development/deterioration of the situation for women in Afghanistan has caused the Swedish Migration Agency to issue a revised Legal Standpoint, which implies that all women asylum-seekers from Afghanistan are considered to be in need of international protection in Sweden, regardless of other circumstances.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.1 Legislative changes

Nothing new to report compared to 2021.

6.2 Policy changes

Gender mainstreaming within the Government Offices of Sweden is carried out in accordance with a Government's decision for gender mainstreaming within the Government Offices for the period 2021–2025. The decision establishes that gender mainstreaming covers all work carried out within the Government Offices but highlights four central processes in particular: the legislative process, governance of public agencies, the budgetary process, EU matters and other international work. The

Division for Gender Equality does annual follow ups of the work with gender mainstreaming, as per annual reports from the 11 ministries.

6.3 Institutional changes

The programme period (2020–2025) for gender mainstreaming in government agencies (GMGA) continues. The Government's development programme for gender mainstreaming in government agencies encompasses 60 agencies and aims to strengthen gender mainstreaming. The agencies are assigned to integrate a gender equality perspective in their activities, based on a tailor-made action plan developed by the respective agency. The Swedish National Agency for Gender Equality supports the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the government agencies. Most of the agencies has developed an infrastructure for future work for gender equality. Overall, the Government assesses that GMGA has been successful in contributing to the fulfilment of the six national goals for gender equality, especially the goals of combating men's violence against women, economic gender equality, and gender equal health.

Ongoing work also includes cooperation with the County Administrative Boards and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) to promote work on gender mainstreaming at regional and local level.

The gender mainstreaming initiative in institutions of higher education continues. All Swedish publicly funded institutions of higher education, plus Chalmers University of Technology and Jönköping University, have had the assignment about Gender Mainstreaming in Academia (GMA) since 2016. The Swedish Gender Equality Agency continues to develop its structured and long-term support. Results so far include development of different working methods, change in routines and promoting ways of counteracting gender stereotypes in study choices, promoting gender equal career paths and ensuring a more gender equal distribution of resources.

6.4 Research and awareness-raising

The Swedish National Agency for Gender Equality holds training courses on gender equality and the 2030 Agenda, gender responsive budgeting, gender and statistics, and on results-based management in the public sector. A web-based learning platform is being developed and some of the learning activities are carried out online.

1. Objectif stratégique: prévenir et combattre les stéréotypes de genres et le sexisme

1.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

- En juin 2022, le Conseil fédéral a adopté un [plan d'action national](#) 2022-2026 en vue de la mise en œuvre de la Convention d'Istanbul. Il se concentre sur trois priorités thématiques : l'information et la sensibilisation de la population ; la formation de base et la formation continue des professionnelles et professionnels ainsi que des bénévoles ; et la violence sexualisée. Ce plan d'action comporte des mesures ciblant les attitudes, les rôles et les stéréotypes de genre qui favorisent la violence.
- Avec l'adoption de la première Stratégie nationale pour l'égalité ([Stratégie Egalité 2030](#)) en avril 2021, un [plan d'action](#) a été publié en décembre 2021 comprenant les mesures prioritaires. Cette stratégie se concentre sur quatre thèmes : la promotion de l'égalité dans la vie professionnelle, l'amélioration de la conciliation entre vie professionnelle et vie familiale, la prévention de la violence, la lutte contre la discrimination.

1.4 recherche et sensibilisation

- De nombreux projets de recherche et de sensibilisation en matière de sexisme, les stéréotypes de genre et la discrimination sont mis en œuvre au niveau cantonal. Ces projets sont présents dans le Plan d'action de la Stratégie Egalité 2030 (cf. question 1.2). Le canton de Neuchâtel prévoit par exemple de [sensibiliser et de lutter contre les stéréotypes de genre dans le cadre de la formation obligatoire](#).
- Le plan d'action national pour la mise en œuvre de la Convention d'Istanbul (cf. question 1.2) contient plusieurs mesures de sensibilisation et des projets de recherche. L'Office fédéral de la communication OFCOM prévoit par exemple de lutter contre les discours de haine sexistes et le Bureau fédéral de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes BFEG d'étudier et de faire connaître les mesures de prévention contre les représentations des masculinités favorisant la violence.

2. Objectif stratégique: prévenir et combattre la violence contre les femmes et la violence domestique

2.1 changements législatifs

- Depuis janvier 2022 les auteurs ou auteures de violence doivent porter un appareil électronique de traçage si leurs victimes en font la demande auprès d'une ou d'un juge civil.
- Une initiative parlementaire déposée en novembre 2021 demande une adaptation de la loi fédérale sur les étrangers et l'intégration (LEI) afin d'améliorer la situation des victimes de violence domestique du point de vue du droit des étrangers (initiative parlementaire 21.504). Toutes les catégories de permis devraient disposer d'un droit individuel au séjour en Suisse lorsqu'un mariage est dissous en raison de violences domestiques. Le Parlement examine actuellement cette affaire.

2.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

- En juin 2022, le Conseil fédéral a adopté un [plan d'action national](#) 2022-2026 en vue de la mise en œuvre de la Convention d'Istanbul (cf. question 1.2).
- En décembre 2021, le Conseil fédéral a adopté un [rapport](#) qui examine les causes et les mesures concernant les homicides des femmes commis dans le contexte domestique. Le Conseil fédéral propose [six mesures](#) pour lutter contre ces formes de violences, parmi lesquelles : réduire encore l'utilisation abusive d'armes ainsi que sensibiliser les spécialistes de la santé à la violence domestique.

2.4 recherche et sensibilisation

- De nombreux projets de recherche et de sensibilisation en matière de violence envers les femmes et violence domestique sont mis en œuvre aux niveaux fédéral et cantonal. Elles sont présentes dans le plan d'action national pour la mise en œuvre de la Convention d'Istanbul (cf. question 1.2).
- La Conférence des directrices et directeurs cantonaux des affaires sociales (CDAS) et le Bureau fédéral de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes (BFEG) ont lancé une [campagne sur les réseaux sociaux](#) en décembre 2021 pour mieux informer les personnes concernées des offres de soutien à leur disposition pendant la pandémie COVID-19.
- En avril 2022, le Conseil fédéral a adopté le [rapport](#) « Harcèlement sexuel en Suisse: ampleur et évolution » établi en réponse au postulat Reynard 18.4048. Il constate que le harcèlement sexuel est un phénomène répandu dont le recensement statistique peut être amélioré.
- En juin 2022, le Conseil fédéral a adopté un [rapport](#) en réponse au postulat Wasserfallen 19.4064 « Filles et jeunes femmes exposées à la violence. Établir une statistique et faire le point sur les besoins en matière de places d'accueil ». Il salue la volonté de la Conférence des directrices et directeurs cantonaux des affaires sociales (CDAS) d'évaluer l'offre en matière de places d'accueil pour filles et jeunes femmes et de faire des propositions pour combler les lacunes constatées.
- Le Bureau fédéral de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes (BFEG) a organisé un [congrès national](#) sur les nouvelles bases juridiques en matière de protection contre la violence en novembre 2021.

3. Objectif stratégique : garantir aux femmes l'égalité d'accès à la justice

3.1 changements législatifs

- En avril 2022, le Conseil fédéral a approuvé l'extension de l'infraction de viol. Le délit de viol sera redéfini de manière non genrée et le fait d'accomplir des actes sexuels avec une personne contre sa volonté sera considéré comme une infraction, même s'il n'y a pas de violence ou de menace. La solution dite « no means no » a été retenue au Conseil des Etats (Chambre haute). Elle doit encore être discutée et approuvée au Conseil national (Chambre basse).

4. Objectif stratégique : assurer une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique

4.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

- La participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique fait partie des mesures prévues par le plan d'action la stratégie Egalité 2030 (cf. question 1.2).

4.4 recherche et sensibilisation

- Plusieurs mesures de la Confédération pour une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique sont présentes dans le Plan d'action de la Stratégie Egalité 2030 (cf. question 1.2).
- De nombreux projets de recherche et de sensibilisation pour une participation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes à la prise de décision politique et publique sont mis en œuvre au niveau cantonal. Ces projets sont présents dans le Plan d'action de la Stratégie Egalité 2030 (cf. question 1.2). Le canton de Genève vise par exemple à [promouvoir une représentation équilibrée des femmes et des hommes](#) au sein des commissions officielles du Conseil d'Etat ainsi qu'au sein des conseils d'administration et de fondation de droit public.

5. Objectif stratégique : protéger les droits des femmes et des filles migrantes, réfugiées et demandeuses d’asile

5.5 autres développements pertinents

- Conscient de l’utilité et de la nécessité d’une détection précoce de toute forme de violences fondées sur le genre, le Secrétariat d’Etat aux migrations SEM travaille actuellement sur un projet destiné à réglementer la détection et la prise en charge des personnes présentant des besoins particuliers (dont peuvent faire partie les personnes victimes de violences liées au genre) afin qu’il puisse être tenu compte de ces besoins le plus tôt possible, tant dans la procédure d’asile que pour l’hébergement et l’encadrement desdites personnes.

6. Objectif stratégique : intégrer les questions d’égalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans toutes les politiques et mesures

6.2 changements dans les politiques publiques

- Le plan d’action pour la Stratégie Egalité 2030 (cf. question 1.2) permet d’ancrer la thématique de l’égalité dans toutes les politiques publiques.

Türkiye

1. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

1.4 Research and awareness raising

-In March 2022, training on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Women's Empowerment and Women's Representation in the Media was provided to experts and assistant experts at the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK). 62 personnel participated in the training.

-In July 2022, 33 TRT personnel were trained on Women's Empowerment and Women's Representation in the Media at the TRT General Directorate.

-In co-operation with Ministry of Family and Social Services and Ankara University Women's Issues Research and Application Centre Directorate, online awareness training on Representation of Women in the Media and Equality of Women and Men was held for university students. The number of students attending the classes between the dates 1-3 December 2021 is 436.

- In co-operation with the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK) in 2022, Media Literacy and Digital Literacy training was provided online through the zoom programme for a total of 5,000 (five thousand) female personnel working in the Central Organisation and 81 Provincial Directorates of Ministry of Family and Social Services and for the women who receive service in institutions.

1.5 Other pertinent developments

The "Academy Meetings I: Women" event was held on 4 July 2022 with the participation of the representatives of the Women's Issues Application and Research Centre (KASAUM) of universities. 26 KASAUM representatives participated in the said event.

2. Strategic objective: Prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence

2.1 Legislative changes

Türkiye's withdrawal from the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence did not have a negative effect on domestic legal regulations on combating violence.

Law No. 6284 has been in force since 2012 and for its effective implementation the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior works in co-ordination with all stakeholders, under the co-ordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Services.

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the law, special circulars were issued by the MoFSS, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

Specialised units have been established within the scope of combating violence in public prosecutors' offices and law enforcement units and capacity building studies have been carried out.

--

With the Law No. 7406, which was adopted in the General Assembly of the Turkish Grand National Assembly on 12/05/2022 and entered into force after being published in the Official Gazette dated 27/05/2022, significant changes were made in the Penal Code of Turkey No. 5237 and the Code of Criminal Procedure No. 5271 in the context of women's rights.

Qualified State Arrangements

In order to combat and eliminate violence against women more effectively, as a result of the amendment made in the Turkish Penal Code No. 5237, the penalty is increased if the following crimes are committed against women:

- ✓ Intentional killing (*aggravated life imprisonment while serving life sentence*).
- ✓ Intentional injury (*the lower limit of the penalty is increased from 4 months to 6 months in prison*).
- ✓ Threat (*the lower limit of the penalty is increased from 6 months to 9 months in prison*).
- ✓ Torture (*the lower limit of punishment is increased from 3 years to 5 years in prison*).
- ✓ Torment (*the lower limit of the punishment is increased from 2 years to 2 years and 6 months in prison*).

Crime of Persistent Tracking/ Stalking

While persistent tracing acts were previously considered among other crimes regulated in the Turkish Penal Code No. 5237, they were regulated as a separate crime in the Turkish Penal Code as a result of the amendment of the Law No. 7406.

Persistently;

- ✓ Physically following,
- ✓ Trying to contact by using communication and communication tools, information systems or third parties,

It is considered a crime if their actions cause serious unrest to the victim or if the victim is concerned about the safety of himself/herself or one of his/her relatives.

The basic penalty of the crime is determined as 6 months to 2 years in prison.

If the Crime of Persistent Tracking;

- ✓ Committed against the child or the spouse who has been separated or divorced,
- ✓ Causing the victim to change his/her school, workplace, residence or to leave his/her school or job,
- ✓ Committed by a perpetrator for whom a suspension decision has been issued,

It is regulated as a **qualified state** and the punishment is determined as imprisonment from 1 year to 3 years.

An arrest decision may be made in terms of the quality of the crime

The offence depends on the complaint but is **not subject to conciliation**.

Acceptance of Reason for Arrest

- ❖ The crime of intentional injury committed against women has been counted as a reason for arrest as a result of the regulation made in the Code of Criminal Procedure No. 5271.
- ❖ The fact that the crime of intentional injury is committed against the person who is unable to defend himself in terms of body or soul or with a monstrous feeling has also taken its place as a reason for arrest within the scope of the Law No. 5271.

Contrary to the above-mentioned interpretation, the crime of intentional injury against women has been accepted as a clear reason for arrest.

Appointment of Lawyers for Women Victims of Violence

- ❖ Women who are victims of violence and who do not have a lawyer **are provided free of charge with one** by the bar association upon their request. In this context;
 - Intentional injury (article 86),
 - Persistent following (art. 123/A),
 - Torture (article 94),
 - Torment (art. 96),
 - Sexual abuse of children (art. 103),

In such crimes lawyers will be assigned.

Before this last regulation, free legal aid was available to persons who were victims of sexual assault offences and to victims of crimes requiring a minimum sentence of more than five years in prison. With the amendment, the scope of free legal aid has been expanded and the access of women who are victims of violence to justice has been strengthened.

--

In the Article 96 of the Turkish Criminal Code, the crime of torture was regulated. According to the article;

Torment

Article 96- (1) Any person who performs any act which results in the torment of another person shall be sentenced to a penalty of imprisonment for a term of two to five years (**Additional sentence: 12/5/2022-7406/5 art.**) If the crime is committed against the woman, the lower limit of the punishment cannot be less than two years and six months.

(2) Where the acts falling under the above paragraph are committed against:

a) a child, a person who is physically or mentally incapable of defending himself or a pregnant women; or

b) a direct ascendant, direct descendant, adoptive parent or spouse, a penalty of imprisonment for a term of three to eight years shall be imposed.”

2.2 Policy changes

Monitoring and evaluation of studies on combating violence against women are carried out systematically and regularly at both national and local levels.

With the participation of representatives of public institutions and organisations, universities and non-governmental organisations, in order to share knowledge and experience within the scope of the studies carried out and problems experienced in the fight against violence against women, the “**Committee on Monitoring Violence against Women**” has been held regularly since 2006 under the co-ordination of the Ministry of Family and Social Services, General Directorate on the Status of Women.

The 15th meeting of the Committee was held in Ankara on 25 November 2021 under the chairmanship of the Minister of Family and Social Services and, with the participation of the Minister of Justice and Interior. Along with the preparation of Meeting Reports for the committee meetings, **a monitoring chart is sent to the responsible institutions every year regarding the works within the scope of the National Action Plan and an Annual Monitoring Report is prepared in line with the data received.**

At provincial level, in all 81 provinces, the “**Provincial Commissions for Co-ordination, Monitoring and Evaluation of Combating Violence Against Women**” convenes under the chairmanship of the Governor with the participation of the relevant institutions, with the highest level of participation rates, for quarterly periods. After these meetings, the meeting reports prepared by the provinces are forwarded to the General Directorate on the Status of Women and evaluation studies are carried out.

--

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the 4th National Action Plan on Combating Violence Against Women and to monitor its implementation, the Elimination of Violence Against Women 2022 Action Plan was prepared and signed by the Ministry of Family and Social Services, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of National Education and the Directorate of Religious Affairs on 23 March 2022.

The 2022 Annual Plan prepared on the basis of the National Action Plan entered into force with a Protocol signed with the above-mentioned institutions and organisations. This is an indication of a formal commitment.

In addition, “**Co-ordination Plan for Combating Violence Against Women**” covering the years 2020-2021 was prepared and implemented as a result of the joint work carried out on the prominent problems in practice and solution proposals in co-operation with the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Health and Directorate of Religious Affairs under the co-ordination of the Ministry of Social Services. The Co-ordination Plan entered into force within the framework of the “Protocol on Increasing Institutional Co-operation and Co-ordination in Combating Violence Against Women” signed by the relevant Ministries.

2.3 Institutional changes

In Türkiye, a total of 149 women’s shelters are in service with a capacity of 3,624, including 112 women’s shelters affiliated to the Ministry of Family and Social Services with a capacity of 2,779, 33 women’s shelters affiliated to local administrations with a capacity of 735, 3 women’s shelters affiliated to the Ministry of Interior Presidency of Migration Management with a capacity of 90, and 1 women’s shelters affiliated to a NGO with a capacity of 20.

--

The number of forensic interview rooms established in 7 pilot courthouses in 2017 has already **reached 151 in 146 courthouses.**

2.4 Research and awareness raising

Among the compulsory courses given by the Justice Academy of Turkey for candidate judges and prosecutors there are “Laws and Practices No. 6284” and “Lawsuits Arising from Family Law” and “Human Rights” courses and compulsory courses including criminal investigation and prosecution processes. In these courses, effective ways on combating domestic violence and violence against women, women’s rights within the scope of the Civil Code and human rights issues are discussed.

In addition, in-service training is regularly given to the judges of the family (measure) court and the public prosecutors in charge of domestic and violence against women investigation offices who are assigned to make injunction decisions within the scope of the Law No. 6284 in vocational training.

Judicial staff other than judges and public prosecutors, namely clerks and chief clerks, legal support and specialist psychologists, pedagogues and social workers working in victim services directorates established in courthouses, are provided with special training on combating violence against women based on equality between women and men and providing services to victims of violence.

A total of **311,008** law enforcement personnel have been trained by the Ministry of Interior in the last 3 years, **153,495** in 2020, **94,878** in 2021 and **62,635** in 2022, with the awareness that they are practitioners in the field within the scope of combating violence against women, they are usually the first unit to contact the victim of violence, and they are one of the most important factors in combating violence against women. In addition, in the last 3 years, **34,055 officer/non-commissioned officers** who have been performing their patriotic duties and **23,669 students in academies** have been given training on combating violence against women.

Since 2007, training and seminars within the scope of combating violence against women have been given to a **total of 2,504,117 people**, including 1,383,385 private and officer/non-commissioned officers, 75,000 public officials, 106,389 Religious Officers, 195,693 Health Officers, 350,000 Teachers, 393,650 Law Enforcement Officers by the General Directorate on the Status of Women of the Ministry of Family and Social Services.

Until **1 August 2022**, approximately **50,000 people**, **13,931 of whom are public personnel**, **15,332 of whom are citizens**, **3,227 of whom are neighbourhood administrators** and **6,714 of whom are university students**, were reached through training and seminar activities organised within the scope of combating violence against women in 81 provinces.

Within the scope of co-operation with **the Police Academy, 5,415** students were reached with the training organised in **11 provinces in May 2022** for the students who received **Police Basic Education and City and Neighbourhood Watch Officers Basic Education in Police Vocational Training Centre Directorates and Police Vocational Schools of Higher Education Directorates.**

“Positive and Intercultural Psycho-Therapy Basic Training” was given to **51** vocational staff from **34 provinces** serving in Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres and women's shelters. The training process is planned to be completed with two supervision work meetings which are planned to be held by the end of 2022.

In May and June 2022, **“Training Programme for Supporting Provincial Action Plans on Combating Early and Forced Marriages”** was organised with the participation of professional staff from 21 provinces. 130 personnel from 21 provinces were trained in the Training Programme.

3. Strategic objective: Ensure the equal access of women to justice

3.1 Legislative changes

Pursuant to the Code of Criminal Procedure No. 5271, victims of crimes of sexual assault, **sexual abuse of children or persistent following crimes and intentional injury, torture and torment against women (added with 12 May 2022 amendment)** and victims of crimes that requires lower limit for more than five years of imprisonment have the opportunity to be represented with a lawyer free of charge.

Also, in the event that the victim is under the age of 18, deaf or mute or disabled to the extent that he/she cannot express his/her position, and provided that he/she does not have a proxy, it is regulated that he/she will be appointed as a proxy without his/her request. In criminal proceedings, legal aid grants the beneficiary exempt from all kinds of expenses, including attorney's fees.

Along with this, within the scope of the Law No. 5271, the expenses of the interpreter assigned to the victim who does not speak Turkish or is disabled are not considered as trial expenses and these expenses are covered by the State Treasury.

3.3 Institutional changes

<https://magdurbilgi.adalet.gov.tr> website was created in order to strengthen the access of crime victims to information and to increase their awareness about the application mechanisms; and it was made available in Turkish, English and Arabic languages.

The site contains information about the types of crimes frequently encountered for crime victims and the mechanisms they can apply for, as well as legal aid.

--

In addition, the **Legal Aid Application Form**, which was created to be used in the legal aid applications to be made to the courts in the field of private law by people whose financial status is not suitable, has been opened to access through the e-devlet, and those who want to file a lawsuit with a legal aid request can access the application form on the **UYAP Citizen Portal page at <https://vatandas.uyap.gov.tr>**. These forms can also be obtained from the judicial support and victim services directorates in the courthouses and the court front offices.

In addition, “Support to the Improvement of Legal Aid Practices for Access to Justice for all in Turkey Project (SILA)” was completed in 2016-2018 in partnership with Ministry of Justice and the Union of Turkish Bar Associations and important outputs were obtained. Performance criteria have been developed for the development of the capacity of lawyers who provide legal assistance to disadvantaged groups and for lawyers who are also mandatory advocates and attorneys of the

Criminal Procedure Code. Also, training modules were prepared to improve the capacities of lawyers working with disadvantaged groups and lawyers were trained in this direction. With the significant gains obtained from the project, Phase II (ILAP) was prepared and “Support to the Improvement of Legal Aid Practices for Access to Justice for all in Turkey II” was implemented in the last quarter of 2019. In the project, it is aimed to implement the “Gelincik” system, which is presented as a successful application example by the Ankara Bar Association, in other pilot bar associations and to increase the professional experience of the compulsory deputies assigned to the cases of violence against women in a sense. Within the scope of the project, 258 lawyers were trained in order to increase the effectiveness of women victims of violence to benefit from legal aid services. The “**Victims of Violence Support Centres**”, which were established in the pilot provincial bar associations and were employed by lawyers trained in this field, was opened on 24 February 2022.

It is aimed to increase the quality of legal aid services, to strengthen the access of beneficiaries of this service to justice and to ensure that legal aid procedures are carried out in a holistic manner in the legal aid offices within the directorates of legal support and victim services.

3.4 Research and awareness raising.

In order to inform the victims of the crime about the judicial process, **brochures** containing information about some basic rights and types of crime (what is legal aid, what is participation, who is the victim, what is reconciliation, what is a complaint, who is a witness, who is the child victim of the crime, what is compensation) were prepared and made available in physical and digital environment.

4. Strategic objective: Achieve balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

4.4 Research and awareness raising

-In March 2022, training on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Women's Empowerment and Women's Representation in the Media was provided to experts and assistant experts at the Radio and Television Supreme Council (RTÜK). 62 personnel participated in the training.

-On July 2022, 33 TRT personnel were trained on Women's Empowerment and Women's Representation in the Media at the TRT General Directorate.

5. Strategic objective: Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

5.2 Policy changes

With the Integration Strategy Document and the National Action Plan (2018-2023) prepared by the Ministry of Interior, immigrant women and girls in different status are informed about the rights and services they have and their access processes. It helps them reach the social support they need, support their access to education, health, labour market and adapt to the society.

The Strategy Document for Roma Citizens (2016-2021) and the Second Stage Action Plan (2019-2021), prepared by the Ministry of Family and Social Services, include a series of measures to be taken in the fields of education, employment, housing, health and social services, and social assistance, and it is aimed that Roma women and contribute to the empowerment of girls in the specified areas.

5.3 Institutional changes

Protection desks have been set up by the Ministry of Interior. Women under international protection and temporary protection in Turkey due to conflict, gender-related persecution or other serious human rights violations in their country are referred to relevant institutions through protection desks.

Within the scope of the Regulation on the Opening and Operation of Women's Guesthouses, all women who have suffered or are at risk of violence and their children are admitted to the guesthouse without any discrimination.

“Project for Increasing Access to Social Services for Turkish Citizens in the Most Vulnerable Group and for Persons Under Temporary Protection and International Protection” carried out in the social protection sector within the scope of the Second Phase of the Financial Assistance Programme for Refugees in Turkey (FRIT-II). Activities are carried out to increase the physical capacity of Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres and women's shelters, to structure protective-preventive service provision, to improve personnel qualifications, and to increase co-operation and co-ordination with local actors.

Another project planned for refugees is to provide more accessible and qualified services to immigrants in their own language, in co-operation with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR); carrying out capacity building activities. In this context, studies are carried out within the scope of creating accessible awareness material, training personnel to increase the quality of professional intervention, providing qualified service and employing professional personnel who can speak Arabic and Persian in order to overcome the language barrier.

6. Strategic objective: Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

6.4 Research and awareness raising

Within the scope of the Gender Responsive Budgeting project, training was organised for the purpose of raising awareness and capacity building on gender-responsive budgeting, and a total of 626 public servant were trained so far. In the events held with the participants, Information on the basic concepts of Mainstreaming, Legal and Institutional Framework, Budget System, Programme and Performance Budget, Strategic Planning and Budgeting in Turkey, Implementation Tools, Key Performance Indicators and Budget Analysis were shared.

Objective 1. Prevent and combat gender stereotypes and sexism

Changes to legislation

On 8 January 2022, the Law of Ukraine “On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On Advertising” on Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender” dated 10 September 2021, No. 1750-IX has entered into force. The law increases responsibility for production and distribution of discriminatory advertising on the basis of gender. The law, among other things, amends Article 24-1 of the Law of Ukraine "On Advertising", which prohibits discriminatory requirements, including on the basis of gender, in job advertisements. In case of violation, the advertiser shall pay a fine in the amount of ten times the minimum wage. The relevant procedure was approved by Resolution No. 863 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 5 August 2022.

Changes in policies

By the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine order dated 30 October 2020 No. 488 the Regulation on the use of gender-sensitive language was approved.

The Instruction on the procedure for conducting official investigations of discrimination and sexual harassment in civil defence bodies and units has been approved (order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine dated 13 September 2021 No. 673, registered with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on 30 September 2021 under No. 1274/36896).

The Procedure for conducting an official investigation of cases of discrimination and sexual harassment at the workplace in the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine was approved (order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine dated 8 November 2021 No. 815, registered with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on 14 January 2022 under No. 39/37375).

The State Border Service of Ukraine has approved the procedure for receiving, considering, verifying, and responding to reports of discriminatory actions based on gender or sexual harassment (order of the Administration of the State Border Service of Ukraine dated 6 October 2021 No. OD-64/0/8-21).

Other activities

The State Judicial Administration of Ukraine annually summarises judicial statistics on the status of consideration of criminal cases under Article 161 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (Violation of the equality of citizens depending on their race, nationality, religious beliefs, disability and other characteristics) https://court.gov.ua/inshe/sudova_statystyka/St_161KK_2021

The reports on the consideration of cases by the courts are posted on the web portal of the judicial authority of Ukraine https://court.gov.ua/inshe/sudova_statystyka/ in the section “Judicial statistics”.

In order to overcome discrimination in the processes of employment, career growth, receiving various types of assistance and incentives, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine has developed an Information Note on preventing cases of discrimination in the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. The “equal rights and opportunities” section, which is available on the official website of the Ministry of Internal Affairs <https://mvs.gov.ua/uk/activity/rivni-prava-ta-mozlivosti>, was created and is constantly updated with relevant information.

Training was held for employees of the communication departments of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in order to improve the level of communication skills in the field of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men and barrier-free environment.

The National Social Service, together with the Ukrainian School of Governance of the National Agency of Ukraine for Civil Service, developed training under a special short-term professional development programme entitled: “Some issues of the interaction of bodies responsible for the prevention and counteraction of domestic violence in connection with the perpetration of domestic violence against children and with the participation of children”.

During the reporting period, the Human Rights Commissioner of the Verkhovna Rada received 27 appeals regarding discrimination based on gender, of which seven related to the distribution of sexist advertising. A separate section (1.2.5) of the Commissioner's annual report is devoted to the issue of compliance with the principle of non-discrimination based on gender.

Major challenges

Opposition to the implementation of gender policy by anti-gender movements.

Objective 2. Prevent and combat violence against women

Changes to legislation

On 20 June 2022, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted the Law of Ukraine “On the Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence”.

Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 12 August 2022 No. 752 approved the State Strategy for Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities of Women and Men for the period until 2030 and approved the operational plan for its implementation for 2022-2024.

Due to the full-scale military invasion of the Russian Federation, the **National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace, Security” for the period until 2025**, has been updated :

- **the range of target groups** of the National Action Plan has been expanded for the provision of **humanitarian, psychological, legal assistance, social and administrative services** depending on the needs of the target group (new groups: women and men who live in the area of hostilities, returned from captivity, reside in the temporarily occupied territories, under the jurisdiction of other states, who suffered material losses due to hostilities and shelling, went missing, were disabled as a result of hostilities and / or during captivity);
- measures are included to **support persons who are in the temporarily occupied territories** and/or under the jurisdiction of other states, including women who live in areas of hostilities, are in captivity, women who were forcibly removed to the Russian Federation, women who were forced to leave the country;
- measures to provide effective and timely assistance to **victims of conflict-related sexual violence** have been expanded;
- the participation of women in the processes of response to armed aggression and post-conflict reconstruction has been expanded;
- **the monitoring indicators of the** National Plan were reviewed.

Changes to the National Action Plan were developed **with the participation of about 50 state bodies and 150 civil society organisations**.

In May, the Government of Ukraine signed the Framework Programme for Co-operation between the UN System in Countering conflict related sexual violence and developed the Implementation Plan for the Framework Programme, all the provisions of the documents are included in the updated 1325 national action plan.

As of October 2022, eight meetings of the Commission on co-ordination of interaction between executive authorities to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men have been held.

In 2022, two thematic meetings of the Commission were dedicated to the issue of “Preventing and counteracting any manifestations of violence, providing assistance to survivors”.

Changes in policies

In July 2021, **amendments were made to the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences regarding increased liability for domestic violence and gender-based violence** (1 July 2021 No. 1604-IX). The law increased responsibility for committing domestic violence and gender-based violence, criminalising it. The law also improved the legal regulation of bringing military servicemen and other persons subject to disciplinary statutes to administrative responsibility for committing domestic violence, gender-based violence. The law entered into force on 1 November 2021.

Statistics: First half of 2022 - 95,394 (78,865 - women), 2021 - 103,297 (86,955 - women).

The mechanism for providing assistance to victims of domestic violence has been significantly strengthened. The network **of specialised support services for victims of domestic violence and gender-based violence has been expanded** (including in 2021 at the expense of state subvention).

431 mobile social and psychological brigades perform their functions assistance, **43** shelters, **37** day centres of social and psychological assistance, **66** advisory services. This is 80 per cent of the network established as of the beginning of 2022. 30 specialised services ended up in the temporarily occupied territories.

In 2022, almost 15,000 women used these specialised services.

At the expense of subvention from the state budget to local budgets (**172 million**), **30 shelters, 38 day care centres, 58 advisory services were created, and 40 vehicles were purchased.**

UAH 1,578,820.45 was spent on measures to combat domestic violence.

Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration O. Stefanishyna, Government Commissioner for Gender Policy K. Levchenko and the Ministry of Social Policy initiated **multilateral consultations on changes and amendments to the legislation** of Ukraine in connection with the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. These consultations took place with the technical support of the UN Women project “Transformative Approaches to Achieve Gender Equality in Ukraine” **Results:** In total, up to 32 legal proposals were reviewed, 38 proposals were submitted; 19 proposals are of priority, aimed at implementing the provisions of 20 articles of the Convention into the National legislation of Ukraine. **The changes are aimed at:**

- strengthening the protection and support of survivors;
- legal definition of harassment and sexual harassment, introduction of liability for such actions;
- improvement of mechanisms for bringing the perpetrators to justice;
- impossibility of exemption from liability in case of domestic violence and sexual violence.

The Order of the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine dated 4 June 2021 No. 194 approved the Gender Equality Strategy of the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine for 2021-2025. Order No. 489 of the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine of 30 October 2020 approved the Regulation on the Prevention and Counteraction of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Other Forms of Gender-Based Violence in the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine, which defines the procedure for considering sexual harassment complaints at workplace or other forms of gender-based violence.

In order to provide an appropriate mechanism for responding to sexual harassment at the workplace, amendments were made to the Rules of Ethical Behavior of Employees of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of 31 January 2022 No. 64,

registered with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine on 16 February 2022 under No. 210/37546); work is underway to amend the Law of Ukraine “On the Disciplinary Statute of the Civil Protection Service”.

In order to prevent cases of harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination at the workplace, the following have been developed in the State Emergency Service system:

- regulations on prevention, warning and fight against harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination in the State Emergency Service system (order of the State Emergency Service No. 255 dated 17.05.2022);
- information booklet on prevention of cases of discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse of power by civil servants, employees, persons of rank, and members of commissions of different fields of activity of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (special order of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine dated 20.05. 2022 No. 265);
- in May 2022, the State Emergency Service published methodological recommendations for survivors of rape and sexual violence and recommendations for personal data protection in martial law on its website and social media.

Other activities

Since the beginning of the full-scale war in Ukraine, cases of violence against the civilian population, including sexual violence by representatives of the aggressor country, have been recorded.

According to regional and Kyiv city state administrations, there are 22 appeals from victims of conflict related sexual violence (21 women and 1 child), 38 people (33 women and 5 children) are registered as victims in criminal proceedings, according to the Office of the Prosecutor General.

The mechanism of documentation, assessment, compensation for damages and responsibility for violence committed by representatives of the aggressor state is regulated by the national legislation of Ukraine.

Article 38 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine defines an exhaustive list of bodies that carry out pre-trial investigation and inquiry, according to which only the investigative units of the National Police of Ukraine are endowed with such powers. The second part of Article 216 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine stipulates that the pre-trial investigation of criminal offences provided for in Article 438 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine is carried out by investigators of security agencies.

At the same time, the National Police of Ukraine is maximally involved in the de-occupied territories.

The investigators are working on recording the facts of the crimes of the Russian occupiers, carrying out the inspections of the crime scenes, damaged property, buildings, surveys of the population regarding such facts, exhumations of the bodies and sent to autopsy. In order to strengthen the capacity of the forensic units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Health, with the support of the United Kingdom, medical kits for forensic medical examination worth 130,000 pounds were provided.

The Victims receive medical assistance, psychological assistance, legal assistance, and emergency and crisis intervention services.

Services are provided by a network of specialised support services:

- 43 shelters
- 37 crisis rooms
- 32 centres of social and psychological assistance

- 66 special social and psychological consultancy services
- 21 regional hotlines

Complex assistance to victims is provided by the Institute of Gynecology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the Center was created on the model of Dr. Mukwege's Panzi Hospital (Congo).

Assistance is provided by the Rescue Centers (Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Lviv, Kyiv).

The centres provided assistance to: Zaporizhzhia - 2948 people (65% - women), Lviv - 782 (85% women), Dnipro - 223 (67% women), Kyiv - 204 (78% - women).

The information platform "E Dopomoga" provides opportunities to receive assistance to persons affected by conflict related sexual violence (CRSV).

The non-governmental organization ICWC held trainings on CRSV in the de-occupied territories of eight oblasts. The following topics were covered:

1. Effective investigation (at national and international levels)
2. Documenting crimes
3. A comprehensive (holistic) (trauma-oriented and victim-centric) approach to assistance to injured persons (medical, legal, socio-economic, psychological assistance)
4. Advocacy work, raising awareness in Ukraine and abroad
5. Restorative justice (compensation issue)

More than 500 people participated in the training sessions.

Target group: entities implementing measures in the field of prevention and countermeasures against domestic violence and gender-based violence, CRSV; survivors of gender-based and domestic violence, CRSV survivors, IDPs, general population.

From 8 to 17 February 2022, online seminars were organized and held to raise the level of awareness on gender issues by the State border service. In February 2022, the State Border Service organized informational and awareness raising events for the department's staff on the topic: "Conflict related sexual violence". Information activities on ensuring equal rights and opportunities of women and men are also held with personnel on a permanent basis. In April-July, September 2022, representatives of the Administration of the State Border Service conducted training events on gender equality.

Ministry of Internal Affairs organised and presented a mobile application for women who have suffered from domestic and gender-based violence or are at such a risk. The project was implemented with the assistance of the Embassy of Great Britain in Ukraine, the UNFPA and with the participation of the First Lady Olena Zelenska.

Information events were organised as part of "16 Days Against Gender-based violence";

Together with the National Police of Ukraine, 45 sectors to combat domestic violence have been created, and 87 mobile response groups are operating in 67 cities.

A video course on preventing and combating domestic violence was developed and implemented into the training of police officers;

Information materials "Safety Plan: Domestic Violence in the Conditions of War" were developed and distributed. Revised and updated curricula for the training and education of police officers;

Chatbot of the Ministry of Internal Affairs has been launched in messengers (Telegram and Viber).

The section of the website of the Ministry of Internal Affairs on combating domestic violence was updated: <https://mvs.gov.ua/uk/activity/domestic-violence>.

The educational series "Online tools for countering domestic violence" was developed <https://osvita.diia.gov.ua/courses/countering-domestic-violence>

According to the information provided by the National Social Service of Ukraine, in the first half of 2022, 95,394 appeals regarding domestic violence were received, including: 78,865 applications from women, 14,583 applications from men, 1,946 appeals from children and 32 appeals regarding domestic violence against persons with disabilities were registered.

Due to the hostilities, there is no information on the number of appeals in Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kherson regions.

According to information provided by the National Social Service of Ukraine, as of 1 September 2022, 716 specialised services provide social services, including temporary shelter to persons in difficult life circumstances, in particular, as a result of domestic violence and gender-based violence, including:

- 43 24-hour shelters (up to 90 days);
- 36 24-hour crisis rooms;
- 31 day centres for social and psychological assistance to the survivors of domestic violence and/or gender-based violence;
- 64 specialised primary social and psychological counseling services for victims of domestic violence and/or gender-based violence;
- 507 mobile teams of social and psychological assistance to injured persons;
- 21 "hotlines" on prevention and counteraction of domestic violence;
- 14 facilities and institutions for the survivors of domestic violence.

In 11 regions of Ukraine, namely in Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr, Zakarpattia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, Rivne, Ternopil, Khmelnytsky, Chernivtsi, about 50 mobile teams of social and psychological assistance to persons affected by the war are functioning.

At the same time, during the first half of 2022, co-ordination of 4,845 informational and educational events aimed at preventing and countering domestic violence was carried out in the regions.

The Ministry of Social Policy, in co-operation with the OSCE, trained psychologists in Ukraine who implement programmes for offenders at the territorial community level (125 participants).

For specialists of the network of social service centers for family, children and youth, in order to increase their professional competence, 52 educational events were held, which covered 345 specialists.

Information resources have been created:

On the official website of the Ministry of Social Policy, there is a section "Prevention and countermeasures against domestic violence". <https://www.msp.gov.ua/timeline/Zapobigannya-ta-protidiya-domashnomu-nasilstvu-ta-zhorstokomu-povodzhennyu-z-lyudmi.html>

To draw the public's attention to the problems related to combating domestic violence, the Ministry of Social Policy launched a flash mob on social media (Facebook) "Start acting", encouraging to post photos with orange clothes and hashtags #stop violence, #don't_be_silent, #violence_is_not_the_norm.

Ministry of Justice: - in November - December 2021, as part of the All-Ukrainian action "16 days against violence", an information campaign was held (in particular, the development and

placement of external social advertising: 10 billboards on 18 city lights throughout Ukraine, distribution of thematic informational posters and booklets, release of 1,353 thematic materials in the mass media and the Internet);

- in January - August 2022, 246 publications on domestic of violence and gender-based violence were released (92 news, 130 consultations, 15 successful cases, 9 social advertising publications), including: 7 TV broadcasts, 18 radio adverts, 91 internet media publications, 12 publications in the printed press, 118 publications on the websites of state and non-state partner institutions and organisations.

The Co-ordination Centre for legal aid took part in the elaboration of drafts of the reporting form on the prevention and counteraction of domestic violence and the reporting form on the prevention and counteraction of gender-based violence developed by the Ministry of Social Policy.

Ministry of Health: In the first half of 2022, 3,427 victims of domestic violence received medical assistance. Out of 3,427 victims of domestic violence in the first half of 2022, 2,509 cases of domestic violence were recorded in connection with the infliction of bodily injuries (gunshot, stabs, cuts, wounds, bruises), information on which is entered to the Journal of records of the facts of referral and delivery to the health care institution of persons in connection with the physical injuries of a criminal nature.

National agency of Ukraine for Civil Service: In 2021, jointly with the UN Women Office in Ukraine, a general short-term training programme "Prevention and counteraction of sexual harassment in the workplace" was prepared (order of the NACS as of 3 December 2021 No. 185-21) and online training course "Prevention and counteraction of sexual harassment in the workplace" was launched for civil servants and local self-government officials. The course is publicly available via the online educational platform of the Ukrainian School of Government. 884 participants attended the online course.

National Police: 45 sectors for combating domestic violence were created in the structure of prevention units of territorial police departments.

87 mobile groups operated in 67 cities. Currently, due to the aggression of the Russian Federation, some mobile groups have suspended their activities.

According to the order of the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine dated 19 October 2021 No. 165/37 "On taking measures within the framework of the annual "16 Days Against Violence" campaign in Ukraine" the national police units carried out 35,318 activities in the period from 25 November to 10 December 2021 aimed at drawing the public's attention to overcoming domestic violence.

The order of the National police dated 28 December 2021 No. 1081 implemented a pilot project of the information subsystem "Accounting of the Offender" of the information and communication system "Information Portal of the National Police of Ukraine".

In addition, together with the State Research Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, methodological recommendations "Actions of police officers to prevent, detect and document offences related to domestic violence" were developed.

National Social Service: The National Social Service has prepared a thematic calendar "We are against violence!" for the year 2022. The National Social Service monitors the functioning of the network of specialized support services for persons affected by domestic violence and/or gender-based violence. Together with the Council of Europe project "Combating violence against women in Ukraine" from 18 to 20 and 22 July 2022, an online training "Professional training for providing

services to victims of sexual violence during the conflict with a special attention to women and girls” was held (50 participants).

On 21 July 2022, a webinar was held with the Council of Europe project “Combating violence against women in Ukraine” for specialists who coordinate and provide services to victims of conflict-related sexual violence (512 participants).

Office of the Prosecutor General: In order to increase the level of professional competence of prosecutors and police officers, the Office of the Prosecutor General, together with the Training Center for Prosecutors in Ukraine, developed a training course in the field of combating domestic violence.

On 13-16 December 2021, the first training of trainers was held on the basis of the training center for prosecutors of Ukraine . 10 representatives from the regional prosecutor's offices and the Main Departments of the National Police of Ukraine took part in the training.

In addition, in order to take co-ordination and supervisory measures in relation to offences related to domestic violence, the order of the Prosecutor General dated 29 December 2021 No. 403 established an Interdepartmental Working Group on Combating Domestic Violence.

On 21 January 2022, the first meeting of the aforementioned Interdepartmental Working Group was held, and further steps were planned to counter and ensure an effective pre-trial investigation of criminal offences related to domestic violence.

In November 2021, a department for gender policy, prevention and countermeasures against domestic violence was established within the structure of the Co-ordination Centre for Legal Aid.

The training centre for prosecutors in Ukraine carried out:

- a training course for prosecutors “Counteracting Trafficking in Humans” (offline format), in which 31 prosecutors took part;
- training for prosecutors on Peculiarities of investigating the facts of rape in the context of armed conflict " (online format), in which 119 prosecutors took part.

The training centre for prosecutors in Ukraine prepared and distributed among prosecutors materials on the investigation of sexual violence in the context of an armed conflict (in cooperation with the Office of the General Prosecutor and the Investigative Unit of the National Police of Ukraine), and regarding the investigations of the facts of sexual violence in the context of armed conflict (jointly with the Office of the Prosecutor General).

Objective 3. Ensure the equal access of women to justice

Changes in legislation

On 3 May 2022, the Law of Ukraine on Amendments to the Law of Ukraine “On Free Legal Aid” regarding expanding the list of persons entitled to free secondary legal aid, including, in particular, victims of criminal offences against sexual freedom and sexual integrity, torture or ill-treatment during hostilities or armed conflict.

New annual forms of reporting on the consideration of court cases were approved by the Order of the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine dated 23 June 2018 No. 325.

The report on the consideration of cases by courts is posted on the web portal of the judicial authorities of Ukraine (www.court.gov.ua) in the section “Judicial Statistics”.

Other activities

The State Judicial Administration of Ukraine: one of the directions and measures to improve access to justice is interaction with society in accordance with paragraph 4.2.3. of The Strategy for the

Development of the Justice System and Constitutional Judiciary for 2021-2023, approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine dated 11 June 2021 No. 231/2021.

Pursuant to the order of the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine No. 265 of 25 May 2018, since March 2018, an analysis of the gender composition of appellate and local courts of Ukraine, the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine and its territorial offices has been carried out every six months. For the period from November 2021 to December 2022, two surveys were conducted and posted on the official website of the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine. As of 1 July 2022, among the judges of local and appeal courts of Ukraine, 54% are women and 46% are men. Among the employees of court apparatuses 82% are women, 18% are men (see https://dsa.court.gov.ua/dsa/inshe/gender/gender_01_07_22).

Objective 4. Achieve a balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making

Changes in policy

The National Civil Service Agency prepared **training programmes and materials for the development of gender competence of civil servants, updated training programmes and courses.** To complete task 5.4. Gender equality of the National Report “Goals of Sustainable Development: Ukraine” the agency keeps track of the share of women among the higher positions of the civil service (positions of category ‘A). The specialised discipline ‘Gender Policy’ is taught at the National Academy of Public Administration under the President of Ukraine. The same topic is included in the programme of professional development courses. Every year, 3000 to 3,500 civil servants upgrade their qualifications.

In February 2022, the Office of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, in close cooperation with UN Women, carried out a detailed review of 16 existing programmes for improving the qualifications of civil servants and local self-government officials to improve gender competencies.

Coverage within the target audience – 94 per cent - civil servants of category ‘B’, ‘B’; 6 per cent cover category A.

The National Civil Service Agency, together with the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, and international and non-governmental organisations, developed and approved a general short-term programme “Identification and response to cases of conflict related sexual violence, and provision of assistance to survivors.” In 2022, 30 specialists were trained.

Other activity

In order to support the implementation of the Government Action Programme and strengthen the capacity of civil servants to take into account the gender component in politics, the Project “EU for Gender Equality: Reform Assistance Service” in partnership with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in 2022 conducted 10 in-depth training session (40 participants). Based on the results of the training, a School of Mentoring was created, in which 10 specialists began their training.

Target group: women who head or are members of political parties, heads and members of public organisations, civil servants.

Objective 5. Protect the rights of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women and girls

Other activity

Since the beginning of 2022, **95 criminal offences under the article “Human trafficking” have been recorded**. In their structure, 33% is in the form of sexual exploitation, 34% - labor exploitation, 6% - child trafficking, 13% - involvement in criminal activity, 3% involvement in begging, 11.6% - child trafficking using surrogate motherhood.

In 2021, the status of victims of human trafficking was established for 64 persons, and for 28 persons in 2022. 50% - regarding labour exploitation, 16% - use in armed conflicts, 13% - involvement in criminal activities, 12% - regarding sexual exploitation, 8% - involvement in begging, 1% - other.

Among the victims of labour exploitation, 89% were men, all men were used in armed conflicts. All victims of sexual exploitation are women.

In 2021, **UAH 2.031 million was allocated for the payment of one-time financial assistance to persons affected by human trafficking** (including expenses for communication services), of which **412.6 thousand hryvnias were used for the payment of assistance to 60 persons**.

UAH 2.218 million is allocated for the payment of material assistance to persons affected by human trafficking in 2022.

As of 20 September 2022, **30** victims of human trafficking **received one-time financial assistance**.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine forced millions of people to leave their homes. This caused one of the biggest humanitarian crises in recent European history. The war continues, and this leads to an increase in the number of victims, destruction and displacement of people inside Ukraine and abroad. According to the UN Refugee Agency (as of 15 August 2022), about 10.9 million border crossings from Ukraine have been registered since the beginning of the war. Of the 4.8 million Ukrainian refugees registered in 44 European countries (as of 17 August 2022), 3.8 million or 79% were registered in the temporary protection programme or similar national protection programmes.

Poland became the leader in the reception of Ukrainian refugees in the European Union: as of 15 August 2022, 1,274,130 Ukrainians fleeing the war were officially registered in the country. About 940,000 people found refuge in Germany, 413,000 in the Czech Republic, 160,000 in Turkey, and 145,000 in Italy. Almost 90,000 refugees remain in the Republic of Moldova, 87,000 in Slovakia, 84,700 in Romania, etc.

Among adult refugees, the majority are women (97%), the average age is 36 years. In terms of the age groups, the situation is the following: up to 24 years old (10%), **25-34 years old (32%), 35-44 years old (40%)**, 45-54 years old (15%), 55-64 years old (4%), 65+ (1%).

4,710,880 persons are **registered as internally displaced persons (3,622,576 families (3,809 with many children)** (as of September 30, 2022, the Unified Information Base on IDPs).

Women – 2,834,662 (60% of the total number of IDPs).

Children - 22%.

Among IDPs:

43% of working age (**2.6% need employment**),

3.6% - persons with disabilities,

26% are pensioners.

1.4% of the total number of IDPs receive social assistance.

Persons in **need of employment** - 123,243.

Women (75%) predominate among **unemployed IDPs** . 62% of unemployed IDPs have higher education, 24% - professional and technical, 14% - primary and secondary.
Types of assistance provided: psychological, medical, legal, monetary, temporary stay services, employment, educational services.

State Migration Service: Employees of the State Migration Service of Ukraine take into account gender aspects when carrying out their duties. Women who apply to the State Migration Service requesting to be recognized as a refugee or a person in need of additional protection, in accordance with the law, have the same rights as men to be placed in temporary refugee accommodation centers in the city of Odesa, in the Zakarpattia region and Yahodyn (Kyiv region). However, in practice, single women, pregnant women or women with children receive the priority right to be settled in the centers compared to single men. Employees of the DMS, who receive and consider applications for recognition as a refugee or a person in need of additional protection, within the framework of cooperation with the UNHCR, undergo advanced training in interviewing techniques and taking into account gender aspects.

Target group: migrant women and girls, refugees and asylum seekers (including internally displaced).

Objective 6. Achieve gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures

Changes in legislation

In 2022, amendments were made to some legislative acts of Ukraine on strengthening the protection of workers' rights (from 12 May 2022 No. 2253-IX): any discrimination in the field of labour is prohibited. It is forbidden to make demands based on race, skin color, age, gender, health status, disability, suspicion or presence of HIV/AIDS, sexual orientation, political, religious and other reasons **in job announcements (advertisements)**, as well as beliefs, membership in trade unions or other public associations, ethnic and social origin, family and property status, place of residence, on linguistic or other grounds unrelated to the nature of work or the conditions of its performance. **Violation of these requirements is subject to a fine in the amount of ten times the minimum wage (as of October 1, 2022, the minimum wage is UAH 6,700.0).**

From March 2022, **all military positions of officers, without exception, can be filled by female servicemen** . (order of the Ministry of Defense dated 10 February 2022 No. 50 "On Amendments to the Order of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine dated 20 June 2012 No. 412/DSK", registered in the Ministry of Justice on 27 March 2022 under No. 355/37691).

The Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated 29 December 2021 No. 1778 "On approval of tasks and key indicators of the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of official activity of civil servants who hold the positions of state secretaries of ministries for 2022" provides for conducting a gender audit in the departments of ministries.

Changes in the labour sector

The Ministry of Economy, with the aim of completely replacing the Code of Labour adopted in 1971 (hereinafter - the Labour Code), prepared a comprehensive draft of the Law of Ukraine "On Labour", which ensures the further adaptation of the provisions of the national labor legislation to the standards of the European Union in the social and labour sphere. The provisions of the draft law are based, in particular, on the principle of gender equality and provide for **ensuring the rights of men and women to equal pay for work of equal value; prohibition of discrimination** in the field of labor and provision of persons who have experienced such discrimination the right to apply to the court, compensation for damages caused by discrimination.

In 2021, the **gender pay gap decreased by 2.8%**. For the period of 1-3 quarters of 2021, this gap was 18.3% against 21.1% for the same period of 2020.

During 2021 and 2022, representatives of the Government of Ukraine took an active part in discussing and **solving the issues of reducing the pay gap** within the framework of two leading international organisations - the "Biarritz Partnership" for the establishment of gender equality and the Equal Pay International Coalition, EPIC).

Changes in the field of education

In 2021, gender anti-discrimination expertise were carried out: 1 expertise of the model curriculum, 144 examinations of textbooks. In 2022, 141 examinations of textbooks for the 5th grade, 7 examinations of manuals for students of vocational education, 7 examinations of textbooks for students with special educational needs. A total of 155 examinations. **In 2021-2022, 300 gender/anti-discrimination examinations were carried out. That is, all 100%** of the educational content, which is being published at the expense of the state budget, has passed an anti-discrimination examination.

Other activities

In July 2022, amendments were made to some legislative acts of Ukraine **regarding the improvement of the provision of medical care**. In particular, to ensure the territorial availability of quality medical and rehabilitation assistance to the population, **hospital districts are created**. The hospital district are divided into hospital clusters, within which integrated access of the population to inpatient medical care is organised.

The Ministry of Social Policy has prepared **methodical recommendations for ensuring the activities of responsible specialists of local self-government bodies in matters of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men**. It includes the issue of applying a gender approach and the human rights-based approach in the process of managing a territorial community, in the cycle of public policy, as well as mechanisms for ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men at the level of a territorial community.

Ways to solve the key problems of farmers and members of rural communities, including women, are determined by the **Concept of Development of Rural Territories approved by the Government and the Action Plan for its implementation until 2025**. The implementation of these documents creates conditions for the development of life in rural areas and the increase of incomes of the rural population, in particular women, due to the diversification of the rural economy.

In 2022, the agro-industrial complex will be supported through: the implementation of the government programme "eRobota", which includes **six grant funding programmes (submission of applications through the "Diya" mobile application** for grants for starting a new or developing an existing business, **creating or developing horticulture, berry growing and viticulture , the creation or development of a greenhouse economy, the creation and development of processing enterprises, to support startups and to train specialists in the field of IT) (Decision of the CMU dated 21 June 2022 No. 738 "Some issues of granting business grants"); provision of grants for the creation or development of processing enterprises (CMU resolution No. 739 dated 24 June 2022 "Some issues of grants provision for processing enterprises"); provision of budget subsidies per unit of cultivated agricultural land for agricultural activities and a special budget subsidy for keeping cows (resolution CMU dated 16 August 2022 No. 918 "On approval of the Procedure for the use of funds provided for in the state budget for providing support to farms and other producers of agricultural products").**

Business Network of Rural Women operates in Ukraine
(<https://www.facebook.com/ukrainian.rural.women.business.network>).

Target group: civil servants, women, men, girls, boys

In accordance with the tentative training plan for the employees of the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine for the first half of 2022 approved on 24 December 2021, the training “Using gender-sensitive language” was held in February.

Ministry of Internal Affairs:

A questionnaire was developed for interviewing employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to determine the level of satisfaction with labor conditions, taking into account the principle of equal rights and opportunities for women and men, and a report based on the results of the survey was prepared;

The Plan of measures of the Ministry of Internal Affairs to increase the level of satisfaction with the conditions of service, taking into account the principle of equal rights and opportunities of women and men, was developed and approved (order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of 31 August 2022 No. 539).

Ministry of Economy

In connection with the martial law, the State Statistics Service has stopped the labor force survey. Therefore, the only source of information on the labor market is the State Employment Service (SES).

In January - July 2022, 701.5 thousand people had the status of unemployed, in the total number of registered unemployed, men made up 290.7 thousand people (or 41.4%), women - 410.8 thousand people (or 58.6%).

183,200 people got a job, including: 82,200 women, 101,000 men. 29,900 people underwent professional training, of which: 14,200 women, 15,700 men.

As of 1 August 2022, 296,700 people had the status of unemployed, in the total number of registered unemployed, men made up 110,900 people (or 37%), women - 185,800 people (or 63%).

244,400 people received unemployment benefits, of which: 152,900 women, 91,500 men.

In 2022, the Ministry of Infrastructure has planned and is implementing measures to conduct a gender audit of the Ministry, and created a working group for conducting a gender audit in the Ministry of Infrastructure. In April 2022, a survey of employees of the Ministry of Infrastructure was conducted regarding the state of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men, based on the results of which a Report and Action Plan was prepared.

The Ministry of Social Policy together with the International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES) in Ukraine held 3 one-day training sessions on the application of gender approaches during the development of legal acts for specialists of the Ministry of Social Policy (employment, work with IDPs, provision of social services), which was attended by 59 people (13 men and 46 women). The Ministry of Social Policy has organized the online course “Gender-oriented budgeting for community development” for employees of the social sphere. 1,500 people from all regions of Ukraine completed the training.

At the National agency for civil service (NACS), the working group included representatives of the Apparatus of the Government Commissioner for Gender Policy, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Social Policy, Ministry of Health, National Social Service, National Police, Co-ordination Center for Legal Aid Provision, NACS and experts of international and civic organisations.

In 2022, a general short-term training programme “Conducting a gender audit in state executive and local self-government authorities” was developed (order of National civil service agency of 22 June 2022 No. 48-22) for civil servants and local self-government officials. Under the programme,

nine training sessions were conducted and a total of 283 participants from 48 government authorities were trained.

In 2022, a general short-term training programme “Conducting a gender audit in state executive and local self-government authorities” was developed (order of NACS as of 22 June 2022 No. 48-22) for civil servants and local self-government officials. Under the program, 9 training sessions were conducted and a total of 283 participants from 48 government authorities were trained.

As part of the co-operation of the National Social Service of Ukraine with the civil society organization “Kyiv Institute of Gender Studies” in the first half of 2022, a training was “Using Google tools during monitoring of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men” for those responsible for the implementation of gender policy at the regional and district level. 100 participants from all regions of the country took part in the training.

On 22 June 2022, a public presentation of the study on the topic: “Institutional capacity of local authorities to ensure gender equality under martial law” was held for relevant specialists of structural units of regional and district state administrations.

In July-August 2022, a gender audit of the apparatus of the National Social Service was conducted. Based on the results of the audit, a report was prepared with recommendations on the implementation of gender policy in the work of the state body.

Main challenges:

- 1) The main challenge remains the loss of institutional capacity of bodies and institutions in the conditions of martial law, which is caused by personnel turnover.
- 2) Due to the active hostilities, objects of the social sphere are destroyed or stopped working. In particular, the operation of shelters in the Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk, and Kherson regions is currently suspended.